

A reform agenda for SF's new police chief p5

Cass McCombs finds his dreams-come-true girl — Karen Black p24

# GUARDIAN

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## Water wars

How big agriculture and bad politics are killing the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary. By Rebecca Bowe p11

GUARDIAN ILLUSTRATION BY CAITLIN KUHWALD



### EDITOR'S NOTES

By Tim Redmond  
tredmond@sfbg.com

The governor of California loves to talk about the state “living within its means.” That, of course, means cutting education funding, closing state parks, stealing money from cities, wiping out hundreds of social programs, and never, ever, raising any taxes.

He has a different line on water. The state’s economy is in a severe downturn, but California itself is far from broke. This is still a wealthy state. Between the big businesses and the rich individuals, there’s actually plenty of money in the overall economy to pay for schools and colleges and parks and health care. Defining our “means” as a level of spending that’s possible without raising taxes is a purely political decision that has nothing to do with economic reality. In fact, the California economy would be a lot better off today if Gov. Schwarzenegger hadn’t cut the vehicle license fee the day he took office. (Remember: public-sector jobs are just as legitimate a source of employment as private-sector jobs, and government spending is an excellent way to stimulate private growth.)

Freshwater, on the other hand, really *is* a finite resource. There’s only a certain amount of rain that falls on the state every year, only a certain amount of snowpack that melts in the spring, only a limited amount that can be stored in reservoirs. You can’t raise new water the way you can raise new revenue; even building new dams just takes water that would have gone downstream and holds it for another purpose.

The state’s freshwater has to meet a lot of demands. Farmers rely on it to irrigate crops — some of them crazy, unsustainable crops — in what is naturally a dry Serengeti. Giant cities and suburbs in the southern part of the state rely on it to fill swimming

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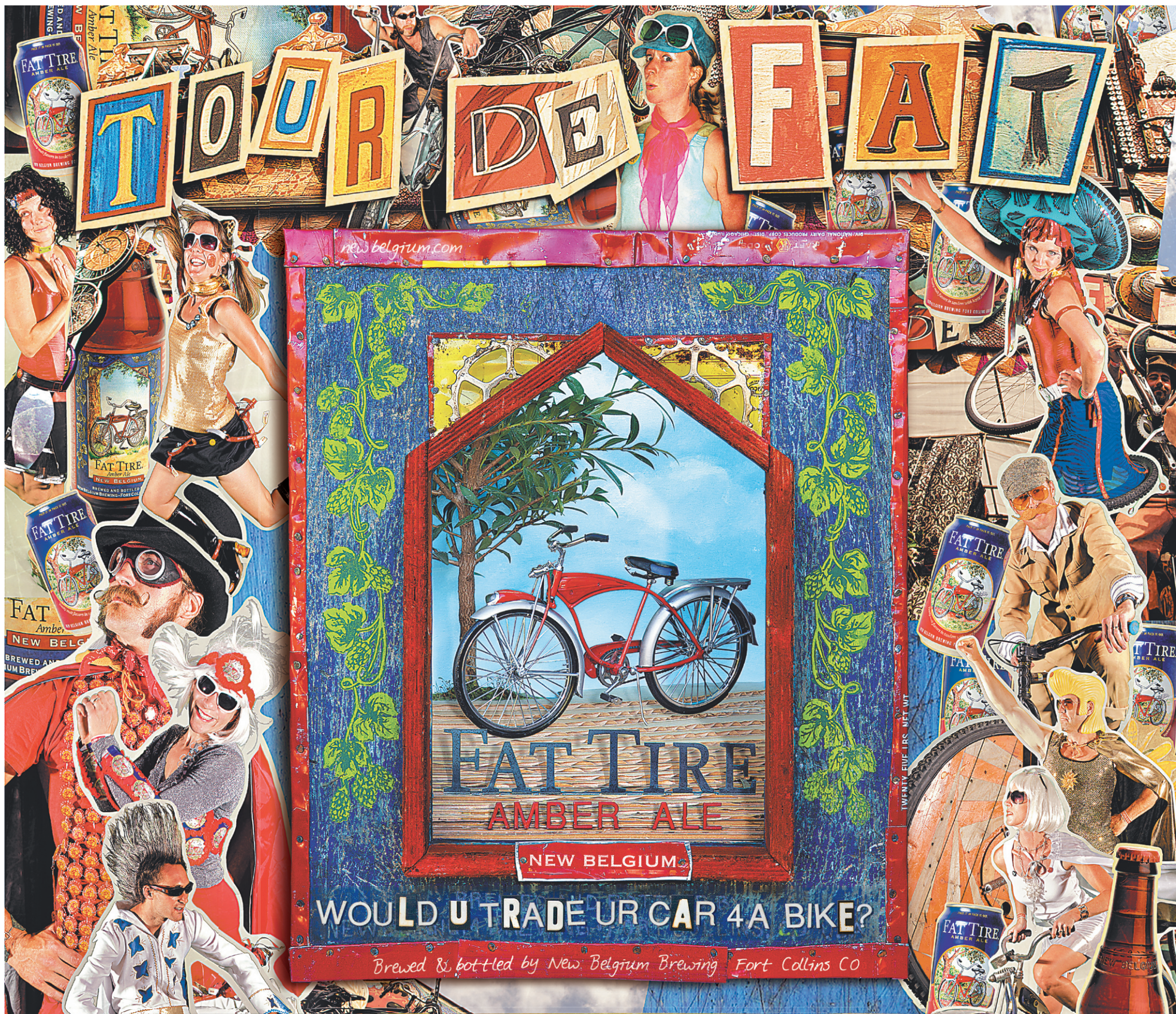
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9.2.09

## EDITOR'S NOTES

CONT. &gt;&gt;

pools and water lawns. Most of the 38 million people who live in this state rely on precipitation runoff for their drinking water.

And if too much water from Northern California gets diverted before it reaches the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, then the complex, fragile ecosystem of the delta and the bay gets badly, maybe irreparably, damaged. And that has wide-reaching consequences (including the collapse of fisheries worth \$250 million a year).

And yet, as Rebecca Bowe points out in this week's cover story, the governor refuses to live within our hydrologic means.

It's insane what's been happening with the state's water. Every year the Department of Water Resources offers to sell more water than the state actually has. In the severe drought of the early 1990s, water diversions from the delta were at record levels. In the current drought, diversions remain high. And that, the numbers suggest, is directly affecting fishing stocks. At this rate, there won't be any salmon left in the delta in a few years. And that's before the full impacts of global warming (and the likely decline in freshwater) play out.

Schwarzenegger's solution: build more dams and a new canal to take more fresh water away from the delta.

The state Legislature is wrestling with a new water policy, and five bills are making the rounds. Some areas are getting desperate and trying what not long ago were considered nutty ideas — Marin County, for example, now wants to build a desalination plant, an expensive and energy-intensive way to get freshwater from the bay.

What nobody seems to want to say is that California, particularly the big agricultural operations in the Central Valley, simply wastes too much water. The conservatives in the state capitol don't believe in conservation.

Any serious Legislative plan has to start with a few fundamental facts. Freshwater flowing into the delta and out through the bay is not a wasted resource; the delta needs a lot more water than it's currently getting to survive as an ecosystem. If that means

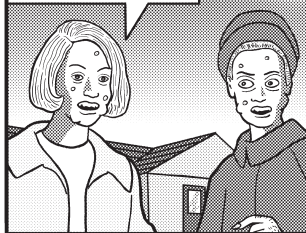
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## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

ONCE UPON A TIME, THE CITIZENS OF A VERY LARGE NATION BEGAN TO TURN INTO MONSTERS. ABU GHRAIB WAS THE WORK OF A FEW BAD APPLES!

ANYWAY, WE'RE AT WAR! THESE THINGS HAPPEN!



AS TIME WENT BY, THE EVIDENCE OF THEIR MONSTROSITY BECAME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO IGNORE.

--AND APPARENTLY MORE THAN A HUNDRED DETAINEES DIED IN CUSTODY...MANY UNDER EXTREMELY QUESTIONABLE CIRCUMSTANCES...

DO YOU MIND? I'M TRYING TO WATCH JON AND KATE'S DIVORCE LAWYERS ON "ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT!"



IT HAPPENED SLOWLY, OVER THE COURSE OF EIGHT YEARS OR SO... AND AT FIRST, THEY DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE IT HAD HAPPENED AT ALL...

WATERBOARDING ISN'T TORTURE! IT'S MORE LIKE A HARMLESS FRATERNITY PRANK!

AS IS SHACKLING PRISONERS TO THE CEILING FOR DAYS ON END UNTIL THEIR FEET SWELL UP TO TWICE THEIR NORMAL SIZE!



THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE VERY LARGE NATION BEGAN TO SUGGEST THAT CITIZENS SHOULD AT LEAST TAKE A QUICK LOOK AT THEMSELVES.

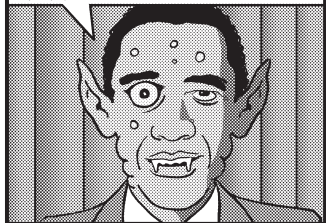
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK IN A FULL-LENGTH MIRROR OR ANYTHING!

JUST A BRIEF SIDEWAYS SQUINT AT A REFLECTING POOL!



BUT AT LEAST SOME OF THEM BEGAN TO NOTICE THAT THEY WERE AVOIDING MIRRORS...AND THAT THEIR NEW PRESIDENT ENCOURAGED THIS AVOIDANCE...

NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO LOOK BACKWARDS--AT WHAT WE ARE! NOW IS THE TIME TO LOOK FORWARDS--AT WHAT WE WISH WE WERE!

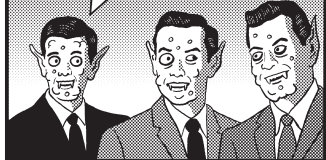


IT TOOK SOME TIME...BUT ULTIMATELY, THE CITIZENS OF THE VERY LARGE NATION DID COME TO TERMS WITH WHAT THEY HAD BECOME...

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT--MISTAKES OF SOME SORT WERE MADE!

BUT I'M SURE IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN!

SO! ANYTHING GOOD ON TV TONIGHT?



TOM TOMORROW © 2009... www.thismodernworld.com

## Rhetoric and reform at SFPD

**EDITORIAL** We're glad to see San Francisco's new police chief, George Gascon, is talking about reform. He's talking about opening up the mediaphobic culture at the SFPD, bringing in new blood at the management level, shifting schedules so more experienced cops are available at night (when most crime takes place). He wants to focus the discipline process on the most serious departmental offenders — the handful of officers who are responsible for the majority of the misconduct problems.

Those are, generally, good signs. If he's serious about changing the moribund, sometimes corrupt, and generally toxic climate in the department, though, he'll need more than promises. Over the next few months, he needs to take action on a few key fronts.

- *Send a clear message about discipline.* The weakest link in San Francisco's civilian oversight system has traditionally been the police chief. The Office of Citizen Complaints has its problems, and some valid cases get dismissed, but

overall, the agency investigates and recommends disciplinary action in most of the serious abuse cases. But the former chief, Heather Fong, repeatedly declined to impose credible discipline, either dismissing or ignoring the OCC's findings. One single officer, Jesse Serna, has so far cost the city \$580,000 in legal settlements stemming from improper conduct — but he's still on the force.

Yes, the OCC has a huge backlog, and some of the cases the agency presents may be weak. Gascon has proposed dismissing about 75 cases now before the Police Commission — mostly, he says, minor offenses like failing to file a proper police report. But the cases that have gone before the commission typically aren't minor — offenses that could result in as much as a 10-day suspension are resolved by the chief. The commission gets cases that are more serious — or that the chief refuses to act on.

Before Gascon starts talking amnesty and clearing minor cases, he needs to demonstrate that he's going to take a hard line on the serious

cases. He claims that "a very small group" in the department has a history that's "irredeemable." Once he's helped the commission fire those officers — and sent a clear message that abuse won't be tolerated — he'll have the credibility to talk about dismissing less-serious cases.

- *Don't be afraid of the POA.*

There are some good, honest, experienced, qualified officers in the management and command ranks — but there are also people who hold powerful positions because of their union and political connections. And frankly, the Police Officers Association has been a major obstacle to reform. The POA doesn't run the department, shouldn't get to choose managers, and needs to be informed by the chief that the needs of the current (sometimes abusive) union leadership are not going to drive department policy.

- *Take a public stand against secrecy.* Under Chief Fong, the San Francisco Police Department seemed terrified of sunshine. The media relations department acted as if releasing any information to

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6 &gt;&gt;

Before Chief Gascon starts talking amnesty and clearing minor cases, he needs to demonstrate that he's going to take a hard line on the serious cases.

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

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## LETTERS

## THE STRANGER SIDE OF WRESTLING

It was strange, maybe even incredibly strange to see a cover article touting pro wrestling's past and present stronghold in the Bay Area ("Inside the squared circle" 8/12/09) that didn't contain a single mention of Incredibly Strange Wrestling. ISW ran from 1995 until about the mid-2000s and was the first promotion to run alternative wrestling shows that played with the politics of mainstream wrestling in both the Fillmore and the DNA Lounge. We also had GLBT baby faces (good guys) and grown men wrestling in chicken suits long before Lucha VaVoom brought its L.A.-based show to our old stomping grounds.

**Count Dante, a.k.a. Bob Calhoun**  
former Incredibly Strange Wrestling ring announcer and performer

## INSANITY AND DEATH

Incredibly Strange Wrestling was groundbreaking in many ways. Where would wrestling be today without the famous feud between El Homo Loco and the The Cruiser? That feud ragged unabated for years while both men spilled blood, sweat, and other bodily fluids in the ring for our amusement. The feud between Kid Anarchy and the Missionary Man led to one of them being committed to an insane asylum for almost 10 years (I am feeling much better now thanks for asking), and the other being legally declared dead four times!

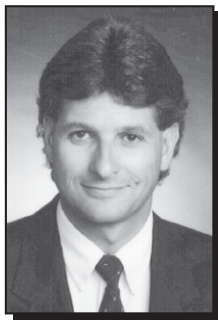
**Thomas Strange**  
(a.k.a. The Missionary Man)

## TONY PAPANIKOLAS RESPONDS:

I actually went to a couple of ISW shows back in the day and had a pretty enjoyable time. With this article, I was trying to frame Fog City Wrestling as part of a narrative of more ...traditionally (?) presented wrestling, so I chose the old

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6 &gt;&gt;





Claude Sidi, DMD

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

CONT>>

the big water districts have to tell their clients to cut back on water use — using proven conservation methods and possibly switching to less water-intensive crops — then that's a reality we're going to have to live with. And more dams, canals, and pumping projects will just shift the problems from one part of the state to another.

California can survive on the water it has — if we stop the insanity. **SFBG**

## SFPD

CONT>>

the media was a terrifying prospect. Officers and detectives were told to avoid talking to reporters. And the cops — who, for reasons we still don't understand, have the authority to unilaterally decide who qualifies for a police press pass — use the most narrow interpretation and keep bloggers, small publications, and nontraditional media out of the information loop.

Gascon has done the right thing by bringing in outside help and vowing to expand his definition of news media. But given the stifling climate of secrecy in the department, he needs to do more. Directing his staff to cooperate with the press (through a public general order) would be a big step. Announcing that all police reports (unless they involve a confidential source or situation) will be posted on the Web would go even further.

Chief Gascon has the chance to completely turn around a dysfunctional department. But small steps aren't going to do it. **SFBG**

## LETTERS

CONT>>

Big Time Wrestling as the foil. But you're right: FCW does incorporate some burlesque-y/counter-culture elements that could have been linked to your fed.

The *Guardian* welcomes letters commenting on our coverage or other topics of local interest. Letters should be brief (we reserve the right to edit them for length) and signed. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification.

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# GUARDIAN

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN NEWS + CULTURE

## Word on the street

*Street Sheet* celebrates its 20th anniversary of helping the homeless and raising their issues

By Wendi Jonassen  
news@sfbg.com

You see them everywhere. When you're getting off Muni, when you're crossing the street, in the corner of your eye: *Street Sheets* for sale. Behind every *Street Sheet* is a homeless person trying to legitimately make a buck and provide a voice for these frequently-ignored people and issues.

This month *Street Sheet* celebrates its 20th anniversary as the nation's oldest, continuously operating street newspaper. *Street Sheet* is a newspaper focused solely on homelessness, poverty, and affordable housing issues and is distributed by homeless or formerly homeless vendors for a \$1 donation.

The vendors keep the profits as a small source of income and, ideally, as a stepping-stone toward a better life. *Street Sheet*, a project of the San Francisco-based Coalition on Homelessness, currently prints 16,000 copies twice a month with more than 200 vendors.

Lydia Ely, *Street Sheet's* editor for its first 10 years, believes that one of the paper's strengths is the consistency of its mission. Bob Offer-Westort, the current coordinating editor, breaks down the mission into three objectives. The first is to provide supplemental income, in a dignified manner, to homeless men and

women. Offer-Westort understands that this income is not a solution to homelessness, but merely a stopgap measure.

Debbie, a vendor who has been selling the newspaper a couple times a week for eight years, uses the roughly \$30 per day she earns to "make ends meet, pay for laundry and shampoo, or to go to the food bank."

The second mission, Offer-Westort says, is to "inform the broader public on issues that don't make it into mainstream media." Even when homelessness, poverty, or housing issues seep into the news, they often are skewed, misinterpreted, or presented with a tone of judgment.

Andy Freeze, director of North American Street Newspaper Association, says street newspapers are "changing conversations around homelessness. Not everything revolves around drugs and alcohol," and street newspapers are bring the real issues of life on the streets to the forefront of discussion.

Despite pressure over the years to include positive stories for tourists, morality tales, horoscopes, and crosswords, Ely says *Street Sheet* continues to address serious news.

Last, Offer-Westort says, *Street Sheet* "creates a forum where an oppressed people get their voices heard." As of 2007, San Francisco's official homeless count was 6,514;



The *Street Sheet* offers homeless people a voice — and a way to make a legitimate buck.

GUARDIAN PHOTO BY CHARLES RUSSO

and in such a geographically small city, it is a community that is alternately ignored and vilified.

Even respectable vendors like Debby experience people who don't understand *Street Sheet*. Debby says some people will "spit at you and call you names. They tell you to get a job." The irony in this is that the people yelling vulgarities at the vendors are the people in need of the education *Street Sheet* provides.

What those people don't understand is that homelessness is not a choice and is not always drug or alcohol-related. In this economic crisis, Debby believes that a lot of the people who yell vulgarities "are just a paycheck away from being on the streets themselves."

But she doesn't let the negativity

get to her. "You learn a lot when you are on the other side of the fence. I have learned a lot about myself." Debby has an established spot to sell *Street Sheet*, a selling strategy, and has developed friendships with some of her regulars.

Offer-Westort, the coordinating editor for the past four years, says his role in the newspaper is not typical of editors in that he doesn't write. Most of the stories are produced by homeless people. The Coalition on Homelessness includes three work groups — Civil Rights, Families and Immigration, and Right to a Roof — that work with volunteers and homeless or formerly homeless people to determine the content of each issue. Offer-Westort coordinates and "checks for spelling."

Much of what goes into print in street newspapers is "high quality journalism that is being recognized in their communities and nationally," according to Freeze. And while the mission of the paper hasn't changed in 20 years, the material, as Ely says, has gotten better because of increased awareness and circulation.

When asked where Offer-Westort wants to see the paper in 20 years, he said he'd like to see it "going out of business because homelessness has ended." **SFBG**

Join *Street Sheet's* anniversary celebration Sept. 10 at 5:30 p.m. at SomArts Gallery, 934 Brannan, SF. Admission is \$25 and includes food, drink, and entertainment. For more details visit [www.cohsf.org/artauction](http://www.cohsf.org/artauction).



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Even respectable vendors like Debby experience people who don't understand *Street Sheet*.

ALERTS

By Paula Connelly  
alerts@sfbg.com

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**Out of Balance**  
View Tom Jackson's new film on the impact that ExxonMobile has had on climate change by funding propaganda campaigns to discredit emerging facts about global warming and by influencing government decisions through intensive lobbying. Discussion to follow.  
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Ecology Center  
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**Healthcare Panel Discussion**  
Hear a panel discussion where experts clarify what problems we are trying to solve with health-care reform, how a public plan can work, what proposals are on the table now, and what we can do about it at this talk titled "What's Washington Doing About Healthcare?". The talk is sponsored by the League of Women Voters and the Voice of Midlife and Older Women (OWL).  
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FRIDAY, SEPT. 4

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**Rally for Grant and Polk**  
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date for the murder of Oscar Grant, get together with members of the community to mobilize against police brutality. Family members of Oscar Grant, who was shot by BART police New Years Day, and Brownie Polk, who was killed by an Oakland police officer Aug. 1, will be there.  
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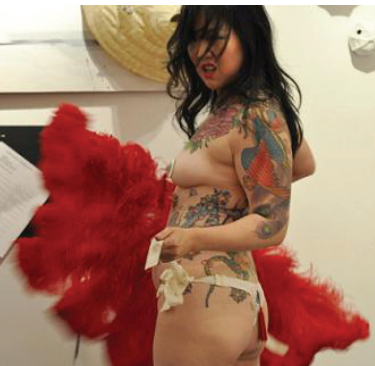
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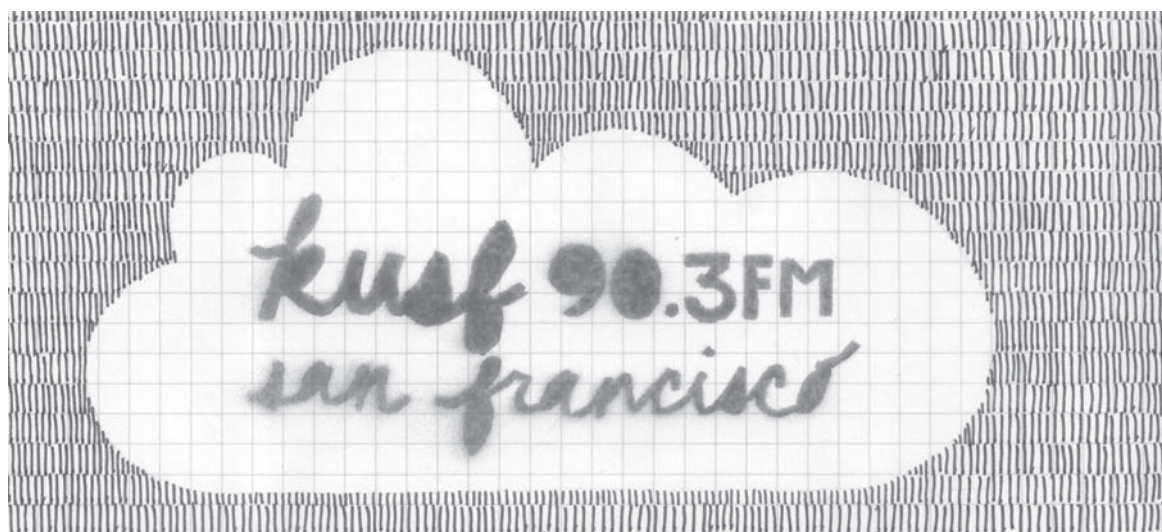


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**SYMBIOSIS GATHERING**



By Rebecca Bowe  
rebeccab@sfbg.com

When arch-conservative Fox News host Sean Hannity decided to weigh in recently on the contentious — and immensely complicated — issue of California water policy, here's how he summed it up: "Farmers in California are losing their crops, their land, and their livelihood — all because of a two-inch fish!"

Television viewers were treated to scenes of the Central Valley, showing a lush field of crops — followed by a dusty, withered almond orchard that has been cut off from water exports from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. A news anchor informed viewers that the nation's most productive agricultural lands were "threatened by a small, harmless-looking minnow called the Delta smelt."

Because a federal judge ordered cutbacks in the amount of water shipped from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to farms in the valley, a farmer explained on camera, growers have fallen on hard times. After showing a long line stretching around a food bank in the tiny agricultural town of Mendota, the newscasters concluded: "It's fish versus families, and [the government is] choosing the fish."

It's a dramatic portrayal, and the poor farm laborers who are out of work are truly struggling. But it isn't the fault of a fish.

The state Legislature is now struggling with a series of bills to address a problem that sometimes seems to defy political solution, while agricultural interests — which consume the lion's share of the state's water supply — are campaigning aggressively to secure even more water for irrigation.

But while the political forces battle, an environmental nightmare is being created in the Delta. Years of massive water diversions are putting the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary at risk. Massive projects that take freshwater from the delta appear linked to declines in bay and delta fisheries, threatening not just endangered species but California's salmon fishing industry, which lost more than \$250 million last year as a result of declining salmon runs.

Meanwhile, climate models predict that California's tug-of-war over water will only get uglier as the state is hit with more frequent droughts. As lawmakers scramble to find a solution to the state's water woes, the challenge isn't just to balance the needs of families and fish — it's to steer an increasingly crowded

state toward smarter management of shrinking water resources.

"It all comes down to climate change," Lt. Gov. John Garamendi noted in a recent interview with the *Guardian*. "Everything we know about water in California is going to dramatically change."

Critics say the bills in Sacramento are, at best, a duct-tape-and-baling-wire solution to a problem that could define the

ate them are rarely held accountable. The agency that is supposed to monitor and protect the health of the San Francisco Bay and the fragile delta ecosystem also gets 80 percent of its budget from water sales. And the state water projects regularly promise more water than they can deliver.

### THE GREAT SUCKING SOUND

California's water wars stem from a tricky dilemma: two-thirds of

highway interchange of water for the state. Two vast plumbing networks — the Central Valley Project, operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the State Water Project, operated by the Department of Water Resources — transport water from delta pumping stations to cities and agricultural operations across the state.

Roughly 5.7 million acre-feet of water was exported annually from

ning tens of thousands of acres.

As cropland has expanded, so has agriculture's demand for water. State and federal agencies sell delta water by issuing contracts to water districts, and the water is priced substantially lower for agricultural use. A report issued by the Natural Resources Defense Council suggests that delta water allocation has traditionally gone something like this: "Corporate and agricultural interests demanded more and more water, and the state and federal agencies let them have it."

No one can say just how much rain will fall from the sky in a given year, so stipulations were written into the water contracts to deal with allocation during times of water shortage. Depending on a district's water rights — a status determined by a combination of seniority and a hierarchy of uses — it may get 100 percent of the amount promised on paper during a dry year, or a mere fraction of it.

But the districts continue to promise water to farmers, and the state continues to promise water to the districts.

This latest round of water wars is exacerbated by the drought, which has sapped water supply in California for three years in a row. The dry spell has led to cutbacks in delta water exports, affecting farms throughout the Central Valley and sending unemployment rates up. The drought was responsible for two-thirds of the roughly 1.6 million acre-feet shortfall in water exports, and the remaining third was withheld by federal court order to protect the endangered Delta smelt.

Making matters worse, many growers in water-deprived places like the Westlands Water District, in the Central Valley between Coalinga and San Joaquin, have recently shifted to permanent crops like almonds and pistachios instead of annual crops that might be more adaptable to unpredictable irrigation supply from year to year. It's a bad time for the San Joaquin Valley to take a hit. The region is already plagued with high rates of unemployment from a loss in construction work, foreclosure, and other effects of the economic downturn.

### HELL IN A HANDBASKET

State Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) put the dilemma simply: "The question is, how do you ensure that two-thirds of the state has a reliable supply of clean water while at the same time acknowledging and addressing the fact that from an

CONTINUES ON PAGE 12 »



GUARDIAN ILLUSTRATION BY CAITLIN KUHWALD

## The water wars

The San Francisco Bay and Delta are dying.  
Salmon runs are collapsing. Droughts are getting worse.  
And big agriculture still wants more water



state's economy and environment in the coming decades. "The bills ... have been slapped together in such a slapdash way that it's reminiscent of energy deregulation," said Nick Di Croce, lead author of "California Water Solutions Now," a report produced by the Environmental Water Caucus.

As things stand, much of the problem is inherent in the system. The pumps that export water out of the delta regularly pulverize federally threatened and endangered fish, yet the government agencies that oper-

the precipitation falls in the north, while two-thirds of the people live in the drier south. The delta, located primarily in Sacramento and San Joaquin counties, is the heart of the state's water supply, where the freshwater flows of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and vein-like tributaries converge. It boasts the largest estuary on the west coast of North and South America, providing critical habitat for at least a dozen threatened or endangered species including salmon, smelt, split-tail, sturgeon, and others.

The delta is also like a super-

the delta in recent years, a high that many environmentalists say is unsustainable. (An acre-foot, or 325,853 gallons, is the amount that covers an acre one-foot deep.) Before the Central Valley Project was constructed in the 1930s, only 4.7 million acres of farmland were irrigated statewide. By 1997, the acres of thirsty cropland had climbed to 8.9 million, converting many areas that were once barren desert into lush green fields. Agribusiness dominates the sector, with some farming operations like agricultural empires, span-



## Water CONT. »

environmental standpoint, the delta's gone to hell in a handbasket over the last five years?" Simitian has taken a leadership role in crafting legislation to reform the broken system.

"I just think that things have come together at this particular time to suggest that there ought to be a sense of urgency about all of this," Simitian added during a recent conversation with the *Guardian*. "But I worry that inaction is always the default mechanism, and in a conversation such as this one, I don't think we can afford inaction very much longer."

Right now five bills are pending in Sacramento. Backers say they strive to meet two "co-equal goals" that in the past have proven to be at odds: more reliable delta water deliveries, and a restored delta ecosystem. Simitian's bill would create a Delta Stewardship Council, a powerful body authorized to approve spending for a new system for moving water through the delta that could include a new version of the much-maligned peripheral canal, a hydraulic bypass diverting freshwater from the Sacramento River around the brackish delta to ship south.

A bill introduced by Assembly Member Jared Huffman (D-San Rafael), who heads the water committee, would require a 20 percent reduction in statewide urban per capita water use by 2020. Other objectives in the legislation are to firm up ecological protections for the delta, reevaluate the state's system of water rights, and establish new water-use reporting requirements.

"Is there a win-win here? I think there is," Simitian told us. "But only if you look at this from sort of a big-picture, comprehensive standpoint, which is why we've got five different bills that seek to make sure there's a balancing of interests. One of the things we've talked about was the co-equal goals of a reliable supply of clean water with delta restoration. And that's going to require not looking at any one of these issues in isolation, but taking it all together."

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has made it clear that he believes building a peripheral canal is the best plan. Variations of this idea have been proposed since the 1940s, but in 1982, Californians voted it down at the ballot (with an overwhelming majority of Northern Californians voting no).

Some groups perceive this as a water grab for Southern California and agribusiness, and delta interests say it would cripple both delta agri-



**Freshwater exports from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta are a major source of irrigation for agriculture and provide a substantial portion of the drinking water supply for two-thirds of Californians.** | PHOTO COURTESY CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

culture and the estuary by increasing salinity levels from seawater and preventing the delta from being flushed out by natural freshwater flows. Cost estimates for that project range from \$10 billion to \$40 billion.

Schwarzenegger has also threatened to veto any package proposed by the Democrat-controlled Legislature that doesn't include bonds for new dams (in their current form, the bills do not). A bond bill would require a two-thirds majority, while the proposed water bills would only need a simple majority vote to pass.

"I think it's helpful for the governor to weigh in and share his opinions," Simitian noted cautiously. "However, I did not think it was helpful for the governor to simply draw a line in the sand."

The proposals are being met with skepticism from all sides. Many environmentalists who've gone to battle over water policy issues for years have little faith, saying the proposed Delta Stewardship Council would cater to the governor's agenda because he would have the power to appoint four out of seven members. They're concerned that environmental issues will play second fiddle as plans are hatched.

Lloyd Carter, an environmentalist who grew up on a raisin farm in the Central Valley, is suspicious the policy will be weighted toward agricultural interests. "What's most useful is to think of water as cash," Carter told us. "It starts out as cash in the public treasury, and one little segment goes in and scoops out as much as it can. Agriculture accounts

for less than 5 percent of the state's economy and they use 80 percent of the water."

Agricultural interests and the water districts that serve them, not surprisingly, view water cutbacks as a signal of government failure and are hard-pressed to go along with anything that doesn't include provisions for new dams and a canal. Rather than recognize limits in the amount of available water, they want new projects that will increase the supply.

The Latino Water Coalition, an organization backed by agribusiness that has put together marches and rallies to protest the water cutbacks, is critical of the proposed package of bills because they say it doesn't go far enough. "For years there's been committee after committee, board after board. If the best that the legislature can do is propose a new committee, how can that be a good solution?" asked Mario Santoyo, technical adviser to the coalition. "There are people who don't have jobs, there's food that's not being grown. It's a human rights issue. There has to be a solution, and it has to be real."

Sarah Woolf, media spokesperson for the Westlands Water District, which is among the most vocal advocates for agricultural water, echoed Santoyo's view. "If you do not have above-ground and below-ground storage and a peripheral canal, then you don't have a solution," she told the *Guardian*. "There's no point in passing legislation that doesn't solve the whole problem."

But of course, when there's not enough water to go around, building

more dams and canals isn't going to solve the whole problem, either.

### SELLING WATER THAT ISN'T THERE

Patrick Porgans, a Sacramento-based water policy expert, is critical of the proposed package of bills for a very different reason. "We can't expect the very government that created the problem to solve the problem, because they are the problem," he says.

Porgans arrived at the *Guardian* office not long ago dressed in a salmon-colored suit with matching snakeskin belt and shoes. The rail-thin 63-year old walks with a bit of a fragile step, but once he gets talking about water, he's a bundle of uncontrollable energy. For more than two hours, he held a pair of reporters in thrall as he unpacked and held up big armloads of charts, color-coded graphs, and government documents.

It's just a sampling from what Porgans calls his "database," and he's got photos: a storage space piled to the ceiling with file boxes containing thousands of pages of documents. This is his life's work, and it's easy to wonder how he even has time to eat and sleep.

In the wake of the 1987-92 drought, his consulting firm, Porgans & Associates, publicized the fact that the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project had pumped more water out of the delta during the dry spell than at any other time in their history of operation. The firm is now suing the government for violating the Endangered Species Act.

Ask Porgans, and he will tell you that "the peripheral canal is a peripheral issue" because it couldn't possibly address the underlying shortcomings of the water-policy system itself. He pointed out that 80 percent of DWR's operating budget is derived from water contracts, and noted that many top officials in water-project agencies arrive through a revolving door from the water districts themselves. There's a conflict of interest, he said, because the agencies are in charge of both selling off delta water and acting as the stewards of the estuary, a natural resource owned by everyone.

Then there's the underlying problem of the government having sold off contracts for more water than it could actually deliver, a point Porgans highlighted in his notice of intent to sue. In the years following a drought that struck California in the late 1970s, plans were made to expand water storage for the State Water Project — but they fell through at the last minute. Unfortunately, the limited capacity didn't slow the sale of water contracts.

From 2001 to 2006 alone, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation signed more than 170 long-term contracts with water districts around the state, promising to increase significantly water deliveries from the Central Valley Project for the next 25 to 40 years.

"Basically, they oversold the project," said Zeke Grader, executive director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations. "We had all these contracts to deliver all this water, but nobody looked to see how much water there was. More importantly, they didn't look at the minimums that would be needed to protect the delta."

"The shortages are inherent in the project," Porgans said. A court opinion issued by California's third appellate district court in 2000, plucked from his database, underscores this point. "DWR forthrightly admits that 'the State Water Project (SWP) does not have the storage facilities, delivery capabilities, or the water supplies necessary to deliver full amounts of entitlement water,'" Judge Cecily Bond noted, citing a DWR bulletin. "There is then no question that the SWP cannot deliver all the water to which contractors are entitled under the original contracts. It does not appear that SWP has ever had that ability."

Grader puts the blame directly on the water districts. The growers, he said, are "innocent third parties



affected by the actions of water districts that should've known better" because the water contracts specified from the beginning that there would be less water available during times of water shortage.

"We have nothing but empathy for farm workers who are unemployed," said Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, executive director of Restore the Delta, a 501(c)3 nonprofit representing delta farmers, fishermen, and environmentalists. "But their leadership told them, go ahead and do it. We'll get you the water."

Farmers have organized rallies and marches to protest the water cut-backs, angrily putting the endangered delta smelt at the front and center of its campaign. A band of farmers traveled up to San Francisco in recent months, chanting "turn on the pumps!" outside Nancy Pelosi's San Francisco Federal Building office.

Rep. Devin Nunes, a Republican who represents Tulare County and parts of Fresno County, unsuccessfully tried to convince Congress to waive Endangered Species Act requirements to forego protection of the delta smelt and restore irrigation for struggling farmers. (Nunes even attended a Congressional hearing toting a goldfish bowl containing minnows to play up the fish-vs.-families mummery.) The Latino Water Coalition has been particularly vocal, getting airtime on Fox News and publicly appearing with Gov. Schwarzenegger to call for construction of new dams and a canal to ensure a more reliable water supply.

Carter, the environmentalist watching it all unfold from Fresno, shakes his head at the display. If their campaign is successful, he told us, the state will wind up embarking on expensive infrastructure projects that serve an agribusiness agenda at Northern California's expense. "There's a sense of entitlement down here," he said. "They say it's 'our water.' But the rivers in California belong to all the people."

#### DEAD FISH

A series of studies, court decisions, and a Blue Ribbon Delta Vision Task Force convened by the governor have all found that massive water exports out of the delta pose a tremendous environmental problem, and the delta smelt is a mere indicator of the trouble. Failing to ensure adequate freshwater flows through the delta could spell doom for California salmon runs and sound a death knell for the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary. And many contend that building a peripheral canal would be the quickest route to the delta's demise.

According to data Porgans & Associates has collected, excessive delta water exports are aligned with salmon-population nosedives. The numbers tell a tale: high water exports correlate with dramatic decreases in salmon returns after the fish's three-year spawning cycle. Conversely, fish populations bounce back following years of reduced pumping.

Delta water exports reached an all-time high of 6.7 million acre-feet in 2005, and three years later, the

salmon returns were so low that the commercial salmon harvest was cancelled for the first time. It happened again this year.

While Westlands farmers bemoan what they call a "man-made drought," they're not the only ones facing job loss due to delta water issues — an estimated \$255 million was lost last year as a result of low salmon returns, according to California Department of Fish and Game estimates. A report from the Pacific Institute, an Oakland-based

environmental research group, estimates puts farm losses due to water shortages at \$245 million as of mid-summer 2008.

"This closure is among the nation's worst man-made fisheries disasters," an NRDC report notes. "It is on par with the loss of Atlantic cod fishery, and its economic impact for the fishing industry is comparable to the losses that followed the Exxon Valdez oil spill."

It's said that California salmon were so plentiful 70 years ago that

farmers plucked them from waterways with pitchforks. Now biologists say those salmon runs that haven't already been listed as threatened or endangered are in a losing battle with worsening water quality and massive water pumps in the Delta.

An estimated 90,000 juvenile salmon die prematurely each year by being sucked into the heavy-duty pumps, according to a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Department of Water Resources study. Sometimes

CONTINUES ON PAGE 14 »



### Alice Walker

Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Color Purple* will speak about her trip to Gaza, and about how Oppressed People can Become Opressors



### Rabbi Michael Lerner

Editor: *Tikkun Magazine* Author: *Healing Israel/Palestine, Jewish Renewal and The Left Hand of God: Taking Back our Country from the Religious Right* Chair: The Network of Spiritual Progressives

## High Holiday Services

Rosh Hashanah Sept. 18–20 Yom Kippur Sept. 27–28

At University of San Francisco, Fulton St. near Parker Ave, in S.F.

### Beyt Tikkun Synagogue-Without-Walls

(We meet both in S.F. and Berkeley S.F.: 1st Friday night of each month in San Francisco at Noe Valley Minitry, 1021 Sanchez near 24th. Berkeley: Saturday mornings to study Jewish philosophy, social theory, psychology and theology through study of Torah and Bible). Children's Services on 1st Day of Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur. Child care available if reserved by Sept. 10th. Music by Achi Ben Shalom and the Beyt Tikkun band. Spiritual Dance by Miriam Peretz

Pre-registration required. More info: [www.BeytTikkun.org/hhd](http://www.BeytTikkun.org/hhd). Or call 415-575-1432.

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Not surprisingly, that leads us to affirm the perspective of the Israeli peace movement, and to support the movements for social justice, ecological sanity, and peace in the U.S. We challenge the ethos of selfishness and materialism, whether it be in the corridors of power, the media, the banks and Wall Street, the insurance

companies that are fighting against meaningful health reform, or in the Jewish community itself.

And we support the interfaith work of the Network of Spiritual Progressives and urge you to learn about its Campaign for a Global Marshall Plan and its Spiritual Covenant with America (including a commitment to continue to push for a more rational health care system)—check it out at [www.spiritualprogressives.org](http://www.spiritualprogressives.org)

Yet, our primary focus is in creating space for all of our members to develop their own path to a rich inner spiritual life, and to provide a safe and nurturing community context in which each of us seeks to find the ultimate meaning and purpose for our existence, as well as a deepening commitment to alleviate the pain and suffering in the world.

**Services are FREE only if:** 1. you can't afford our normal prices or any donation, 2. you attend at least three of the four services in S.F., and if 3. you register for services **no later than Sept. 10** and explain to us details of your financial situation that make our sliding fee scale impossible for you. **We are a financially-challenged community, so if you can possibly afford it, we'll ask you to pay at the normal sliding fee scale rate, or donate as close to that amount as you can afford, but we recognize that these are financially difficult times and wish to make it possible for everyone who really wants to be at our services to attend.** For more information, or **To Register**, go to: [www.BeytTikkun.org/hhd](http://www.BeytTikkun.org/hhd) or call us at 415-575-1432.



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**GUARDIAN**

## Water CONT>>

the pumping levels are so high it reverses river flows, causing salmon to swim upstream instead of out to sea. "If you or I go out and shoot an eagle, we'll go to jail," said Barrigan-Parrilla, from Restore the Delta. "But DWR has no accountability to the Endangered Species Act — they're grinding up fish."

The salmon also suffer from poor water quality, which environmentalists say is a consequence of the voluminous freshwater diversions. If the freshwater isn't available to flush out the ecosystem, the negative effects of toxins and pollutants discharged into the Delta are amplified, and the water gets warmer, dirtier, and saltier. The ramifications of salmon decline can ripple along the food chain, putting even southern resident killer whales, which feed heavily on Sacramento River salmon in the ocean, at risk.

The impacts of freshwater diversions aren't limited to the region's ecology: delta agriculture is taking a hit, too. The construction of a peripheral canal would "destroy the estuary and shift economic problems from one geographic location to another," said Barrigan-Parrilla. "Agriculture in the southern delta would not make it." South delta farmers have already had to contend with increasing levels of salinity due to the massive freshwater diversions, she says. A homegrown bean festival held every year in Tracy has had to resort to purchasing beans, she told us, because it's become too salty to grow them.

"The estimates are \$10 to \$40 billion to build a canal," Barrigan-Parrilla said with a note of disbelief. "We're going to spend that much money on a project when we have just gutted education and welfare?"

As Sacramento lawmakers pull at the threads of this tightly-wound knot, looming uncertainties are waiting in the wings. For one, the delta's network of 1,100 miles of earthen levees is under increasing strain due to its age, making it susceptible to failure. In fact, some say a peripheral canal could help prevent levee failure. Meanwhile, climate change is a challenge that can't be ignored because it will affect overall water supply even as the state's population continues to climb.

"The science makes it increasingly clear that the current system is unsustainable, Simitian said. The scientists are telling us there's a two out of three chance that in the next 50 years the whole system will collapse, and that serves neither the

## Water Exports and Correlating Salmon Population



**Delta exports (at left) have increased in recent years, while returning Chinook salmon populations have declined at the end of a three-year spawning cycle.**

GRAPH CREATED BY BEN HOPFER USING DATA FROM PORGANS & ASSOCIATES

delta well nor the two-thirds of the state that relies on delta water." Simitian doesn't endorse the canal, but told us that the system of water conveyance needs to be changed.

Doug Obegi, staff attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council, told us that thinking about water supply is just as important as thinking about how to move it around. He pointed out that some Colorado River dams just aren't filling up anymore. If you build a new dam without managing the water supply, he said, "you have a big hunk of concrete that just isn't doing anything."

Climate change will reduce the Sierra snowpack, an important natural reservoir, anywhere from 15 percent to 60 percent, according to the Department of Water Resources. The warmer air temperatures will also shift the runoff flows to earlier in the year, making major adjustments necessary. Climate change models also predict worsening drought. Water shortages worse than those caused by the 1977 drought could occur in one out of every six to eight years by 2050, and one out of every three to four years by 2100, according to the department's study. The change in weather patterns will also increase the likelihood of floods.

Rising sea levels will also bring more saline ocean water into the delta, making it necessary to inject more freshwater into the system to maintain water quality and protect native species.

All told, climate change is expected to reduce overall delta water exports from 7 percent to 10 percent by 2050, and 21 percent to 25 percent by the end of the century

— a heavy toll that can't be managed without smarter water management.

Pending water shortages can be addressed in part with what NRDC calls California's "virtual river," Obegi said, an aggressive system of water efficiency, waste-water recycling, groundwater cleanup and storm-water management that could yield a potential 7 million acre-feet per year.

As for agriculture, the 800-pound gorilla of water consumption in the state, there's plenty of room for improvement. A report by the Pacific Institute estimates that annual agricultural water savings — with a combination of strategies like smarter irrigation management, modest crop shifting, and more efficient technology — could save up to 3.4 million acre-feet of water per year. The study strongly recommends avoiding expensive infrastructure projects that will burden taxpayers when the state has more budget-friendly options like targeted conservation and efficiency.

It won't happen without the political will, however. During a discussion about the bills that are currently being debated in Sacramento, Barrigan-Parrilla said she fears the delta will lose out in the end. It's hard for her to swallow the whole concept of "co-equal goals," she says, because it amounts to putting the environment, which is owned collectively, on equal footing with the interests of a small group of people who consume the vast amount of the state's water supply.

"It just doesn't make sense to me," she says. "You can't have a reliable water supply unless you take care of the environment first." **SFBG**

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# Desperate measures?

By Sarah Phelan  
sarah@sfbg.com

**GREEN CITY** A proposal to open the first desalination plant on the San Francisco Bay inched forward Aug. 18 when the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) board voted 4-0 to build a facility that would convert 5 million gallons of seawater a day into fresh drinking water.

It's the latest chapter in a saga that has pit environmentalists, who see the plant as too energy intensive, against business and development interests, which fear the district is going to run out of water.

The plant, which is planned for a seven-acre shoreline plot in San Rafael and could be up and running by 2014, would cost an estimated \$105 million to build and another \$3 million to \$4 million a year to operate. MMWD says it will fund the project using bonds and a \$3 to \$5 increase in monthly water bills.

MMWD Board President David Behar and directors Larry Russell, Cynthia Koehler, and Jack Gibson also approved \$400,000 to cover permits and design construction of the new facility.

The Aug. 18 vote took place with the five-member MMWD board short a director (former Board President Alex Forman died July 9). And it came after hours of public comment, with opponents arguing that desalination is too expensive, detrimental to marine life, and will release climate-changing gases.

"When you look at the bigger picture, it makes no sense," said Mark Schlosberg, California Director for the Washington, D.C.-based Food & Water Watch, an environmental advocacy group.

In June, Food & Water Watch's James Frye released a report titled "Sustaining Our Water Future," which argues that MMWD could meet its future water needs by intensifying conservation measures and improving reservoir operations. Frye's report also indicated that the water district overestimated its expected water shortfall because it based its calculations on high-use years.

But MMWD's general manager Paul Helliker contends the report was not realistic. "They are talking about everyone, business and homeowners, cutting landscape water use by 40 percent. That's a phenomenal cut," Helliker told the *Marin*

*Independent Journal* at the time.

Others see desalination as a drought-proof way to satisfy projected population and economic growth.

"We're concerned about bringing supply and demand into balance," Hal Brown, president of the Marin County Board of Supervisors, said during public comment.

"Under a severe drought, the economy will be impacted tremendously," said Bill Scott, business manager of the Marin Building Trades Council.

When the board ultimately voted to green-light the next steps in the desalination plant building process, they noted that they will explore the use of alternative renewable energy sources, including solar, wind, wave/tidal, or landfill gas, to power the plant. They also pointed out that when the next drought hits, Marin won't be able to build emergency pipelines and negotiate for more water from the Russian River, which is what the county did during previous droughts.

Today, Marin County relies on seven small local reservoirs. The district contends that the new facility will be insurance against longer dry spells, which are anticipated due to global warming.

"This has been hard," Board member Cynthia Koehler acknowledged, addressing the riled-up crowd and noting that the district still has "a number of off-ramps."

The MMWD is already on the vanguard of conservation statewide, Koehler noted, observing that no water district achieves its conservation goals. "So I don't think six years is rushing," he said.

"We will not build a desalination plant without the need," MMWD director Larry Russell told the crowd. "We are not fast-tracking this. But if a drought comes, we will."

"I'd be lying if I said I have no concerns about de-sal, starting with the energy," MMWD director Jack Gibson told the agitated crowd. "So, why am I not there with you? I view it as being prepared."

Recalling how attitudes changed overnight when the drought hit in 1976 and 1977, Gibson added, "If we have a serious water crisis, people are going to be clamoring for water. My concern is that the Russian River, as a fish habitat, will be gone."

With four of five seats up for election in November 2010 election, the composition of the board could change dramatically before the desalination plant's fate is sealed. **SFBG**

## Energy 92.7 and AT&T are Honoring The People Of The Bay Who Raise The Bar In The Community.

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Log on to [www.out4immigration.org](http://www.out4immigration.org) today to learn more about this organization. amos lim has been selected as this week's AT&T Spotlight community hero and AT&T is going to donate \$500 to his organization.

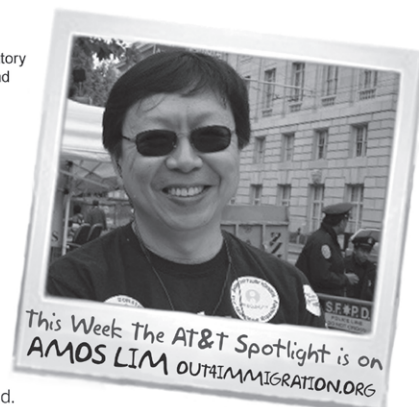
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**As I prepare for my seventh trip to Burning Man this weekend, I came across a fascinating discussion about restrictions on the use of photography from the event. Electronic Freedom Foundation fired the first shot, criticizing Burning Man for controlling the use of images from the event, and BM's Andie Grace responded with a long defense of their reasons for doing so, and lively discussions ensued on other blogs.**

**- from "Is Burning Man right to control images from the event?" by Steven T. Jones, posted on the Pixel Vision blog**

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## PUBLIC NOTICE HUNTERS POINT SHIPYARD PUBLIC NOTICE & COMMENT PERIOD

September 2009

This public notice serves as the publication by the Director of the U.S. Department of Navy (DON) BRAC Program Management Office West (BRAC PMO West) of the Director's proposal to dissolve the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard (HPS) Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) as provided by 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 202. BRAC PMO West has consulted with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as well as State, and local government representatives about this proposal.

DON fully supports the need for open, meaningful dialogue with the diverse Bayview Hunters Point Community regarding DON environmental cleanup actions and decisions. The purpose of a RAB is to ensure community involvement in the environmental cleanup process whereby an open discussion and exchange of information occurs. However, the RAB has not been fulfilling this objective. Therefore, other means to accomplish this important goal are being explored. As DON follows the RAB dissolution regulations, BRAC PMO West will continue to work with community and regulatory partners to find alternative means to meet these community involvement goals and requirements.

BRAC PMO West specifically requests your ideas for an effective community involvement program which will reach a broad community audience and encourage effective two-way communication between the community and DON regarding environmental cleanup issues at HPS. BRAC PMO West solicits your comments on the proposal to dissolve the RAB, as well as ideas regarding more productive community involvement alternatives.

A copy of the Director of BRAC PMO West's proposal to dissolve the RAB has been made available for public review and comment for a thirty day public comment period at the following website:

[www.bracpmo.navy.mil](http://www.bracpmo.navy.mil)

1. Click on BRAC 2005, then select 'Former NSY Hunters Point' from the 'Prior BRAC Installations' drop down menu.
2. Click on the link below RAB Meeting Information: 'May 22, 2009: Department of the Navy's Notice of Intent to Dissolve the Hunters Point Shipyard (HPS) Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Letter.'

Paper copies of the proposal to dissolve the RAB have been made available in the following information repositories.

**Anna E. Waden Library**  
5075 Third Street  
San Francisco, CA 94124

**City of San Francisco Main Library**  
Government Information Center, 5th Floor  
100 Larkin Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

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Thurs 1:00pm - 7:00pm  
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Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat 10:00am - 6:00pm  
Tues & Thurs 9:00am - 8:00pm  
Sun 12:00pm - 5:00pm

Again, BRAC PMO West solicits your comments on the proposal to dissolve the RAB, as well as ideas regarding more productive community involvement alternatives. DON will consider all comments submitted by October 9, 2009, to the following address:

BRAC PMO West  
Mr. Douglas Gilkey, HPS Base Closure Manager  
1455 Frazee Road, San Diego, CA 92108  
Email: [douglas.gilkey@navy.mil](mailto:douglas.gilkey@navy.mil) Fax: (619) 532-0983

Please feel free to contact Mr. Gilkey at (619) 532-0949 if you have any questions concerning the public review and comment process.



# GUARDIAN

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN PICKS



## WEDNESDAY SEPT. 2

### EVENT/LIT

#### Rebecca Solnit: *A Paradise Built in Hell*

"I went into this thinking that the joy in disasters was going to be subversive, maybe like a child's delight in destruction, with a sense of liberation attached," Rebecca Solnit says in a recent interview connected to her new book *A Paradise Built in Hell* (Viking, 353 pages, \$27.95). "What I found instead was an unspoken appetite for belonging, involvement, power, and voice, a delight in the constructive rather than destructive." Solnit is not known for sentiment, so the optimism of her latest book is by no means sugary. It's fitting that the book release party for *A Paradise Built in Hell* is taking place in San Francisco, because both the 1906 and 1989 earthquakes play major roles in Solnit's look at community. She also writes about 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the 1917 Halifax explosion, and the 1985 Mexico City quake. But the Bay Area and its potential is central to her thesis. **(Johnny Ray Huston)**

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www.thegreenarcade.com

## THURSDAY SEPT. 3

### MUSIC

#### Jucifer

Scene-spanning metal(ish) duo Jucifer has a particular knack for crafting songs that feel spontaneous but at the same time are governed by some incomprehensible structure. The band consists of a constantly-touring married couple: guitarist/vocalist Amber Valentine and drummer Edgar Livengood, two 16-year noise vets charged with the task of wrangling their unruly musical progeny into something resembling rock. Jucifer's latest release, *L'Autrichienne* (Relapse, 2008) is a sprawling concept album — double album, in fact — based on the life of Marie Antoinette. Connoisseurs of earsplitting distortion or French history have something to look forward to, and connoisseurs of both may have finally found a band that speaks to them directly. **(Tony Papanikolas)**

With Graceyon, Flood, DJ Fanboy.  
8 p.m., \$8–\$10, 21 and over  
Annie's Social Club  
917 Folsom, SF  
(415) 974-1585  
www.anniessocialclub.com

### VISUAL ART

#### Ryan Coffey: "New Work"

No doubt about it: collage is experiencing a new wave of popularity within contemporary visual art, complete with *Artforum* essays and attention. The obvious argument would be that collage is a suitable practice for economic depression, but the reasons likely run much deeper. One interesting aspect of this revival of sorts is that amid neverending digital hype, a significant number of young artists apply collage aesthetics to works on paper. Here in the Bay Area, home to the late, great Jess, artists such as Hilary Pecis, Chris Corales, and Luke Butler are exploring the potential of collage. Through works as potent as they are spare, Ryan Coffey has been honing an especially distinctive collage vision. His new show adds some vivid splashes of color to his approach. **(Johnny Ray Huston)**

7–9:30 p.m. (continues through Oct. 11), free  
Lake Gallery  
661 Divisadero, SF  
www.lakegallerysf.com

### MUSIC

#### Mos Def, Erykah Badu, Jay Electronica

Still sleeping on Mos Def's strongest effort since *Black On Both Sides* (Rawkus,

1999)? The intro cut of *The Ecstatic* (Downtown) should be enough to put you on game. A rough Malcolm X monologue prefaces "Supermagic," where a dexterous Mos spits exuberant bars over Turkish psychedelic madness courtesy of the poetico-political genius, Selda, and flipped by LA beat wizard Oh No. Still not convinced? Perchance a live show — or two — featuring the cosmically adept Erykah Badu and lyrical dervish Jay Electronica will hip you to the wisdom. **(Michael Krimper)**

7:30 p.m., \$39.50–\$99.50  
Davies Symphony Hall  
201 Van Ness, SF  
(415) 864-6000  
www.sfsymphony.org

also Fri/4, 7:30 p.m., \$39.50–\$99.50  
Paramount Theatre  
2025 Broadway, Oakl.  
(510) 763-7308  
www.paramounttheatre.com

### VISUAL ART

#### Alika Cooper: "A Cold Wave"

San Francisco artists love cinema iconography: Jason Mecier renders movie stars with beans and noodles, Jim Winters brings fluorescent color to film stills, and Maria Forde has turned drawings of actresses into buttons. Alika Cooper loves a screen siren, and she knows all about the appeal of a blonde. She

first made an impression on me with her portraits of Hitchcock-era Tippi Hedren. In "A Cold Wave," she uses paint to conjure a variety of double Farrah Fawcetts. Morbidity and luxurious beauty intertwine in the resulting moody works. **(Huston)**

Mark Wolfe Contemporary Art  
49 Geary, Suite 202, SF  
(415) 369-9404  
www.wolfecontemporary.com

## FRIDAY SEPT. 4

### STAGE

#### Helen Keller

Our senses allow us to interact with one another — to connect, bond, and grow as individuals. But what is it like to live in isolation when one's physical disabilities hinder this process? Theatre of Yugen explores this question with a new play about deaf and blind author and activist Helen Keller. Adapted from William Gibson's 1959 *The Miracle Worker*, it follows Helen from when she's six years old and meeting teacher Anne Sullivan for the first time to when she utters her first word, "water." The hour-long one-act relies mostly on sign language, though its speaking parts are entirely in Japanese, allowing English-speaking audiences to experience a variant of Helen's

struggle as she makes sense of a foreign world. **(Victoria Nguyen)**

8 p.m. (continues through Sun/6), \$10–\$15  
NOHspace  
2840 Mariposa, SF  
(415) 621-7978  
www.theatreofyugen.org

### COMEDY

#### Kathy Griffin

Like politics or religion, I've found that most people hold strong opinions about Kathy Griffin — either you think she's obnoxious and mean or you find her completely hilarious. I fall into the latter category. Kathy reminds me of the sassy, ballsy gal pal I've never had — the kind who will talk you into mooning the high school principal after downing a fifth of cheap vodka behind the bleachers. Watch the two-time Emmy Award-winning actress in action when she brings her sharp wit and even sharper tongue to Davies Symphony Hall, where she'll dish about celebrity encounters, life on the D-list, and her mom Maggie. **(Nguyen)**

8 p.m. (also Sat/5), \$45–\$75  
Davies Symphony Hall  
201 Van Ness, SF  
(415) 864-6000  
www.sfsymphony.org



Connoisseurs of earsplitting distortion or French history  
have something to look forward to.



FILM

*The Beautiful Person*

I have a definite soft spot for the films of Christophe Honoré, in particular 2006's *Dans Paris* and 2007's *Love Songs*. In *Dans Paris*, Honoré played with the intersection of music and image in inventive ways, creating a semi-musical of sorts, while in *Love Songs* he plunged into the genre, generating an overt 21st century update of Jean-Luc Godard's and Jacques Demy's 1960s song and dance features. That film's core romantic numbers featured Louis Garrel, Grégoire Leprince Ringuet, and some sherbet-colored underwear. Two of the three return in Honoré's latest, *The Beautiful Person*. Garrel's presence is no surprise, I suppose, since he has starred in all of Honoré's films. This time around, Garrel and Leprince-Ringuet are part of a different kind of love triangle, based in part upon a 17th-century novel. **(Huston)**

Call for times (continues through Sept. 10), \$8–\$11 Sundance Kabuki Cinemas 1881 Post, SF (415) 561-5000 [www.sffs.org](http://www.sffs.org)

SATURDAY  
SEPT. 5

MUSIC

*Sabertooth Zombie*

An actual Sabertooth Zombie, combining the massive fangs of the former with the unrelenting brain-lust of the latter, would truly be the stuff of nightmares. The band Sabertooth Zombie, it turns out, is pretty savage in its own right, specializing in no-nonsense hardcore with a noticeable classic rock edge. The combination of strutting butt-rock licks with deliberate breakdown fare has been done before, but rarely has it been so effective in loosening necks. At the risk of sounding clichéd, this is music to sink your teeth into. **(Papanikolas)**

With Whiskey Rebels, Skin Like Iron, Creatures, Nails. 8 p.m., \$8, all ages 924 Gilman 924 Gilman, Berk. (510) 525-9926 [www.924gilman.org](http://www.924gilman.org)

SUNDAY  
SEPT. 6

EVENT/MUSIC

*Doin' It in the Park*

Doin' it in the park, doin' it after dark. Oh yeah. Oh yeaah. Er, hey there. Excuse

me, I was busy singing my favorite Blackbyrds joint, "Rock Creek Park," trying to curb my neurotic anxieties in preparation for this Sunday's free barbeque extravaganza in Golden Gate Park. There, I will attempt the art of relaxation amid the grooves of the city's best spinners, an inflatable jumper for kids, community love, and even arcade games! Oh, the pure little innocence deep within my dark jaded soul just wants to hum some apparently naive but actually quite dirty jams! Oh yeah. **(Krimper)**

With Apollo, Shortkut, Mr. E, Sake One, TD Camp, Ruby Red I, Mind Motion, Haylow, Daddy Rolo, Proof, Shred One, Green B, Hakobo

Noon-7 p.m., free Golden Gate Park (Elk Glen Cove at 25th Ave.), SF [www.sfmassiveselector.net](http://www.sfmassiveselector.net)

MONDAY  
SEPT. 7

EVENT

*Time for Lunch: National Day of Action to Get Real Food in the Schools*

I remember pizza day at school, and how the greasy slab of microwaved cheese and pepperoni, while not half as good as a regular slice, was still better than all the other lunches of the week.

School lunches have a bad rep for a reason. Slow Food is doing something about it by staging a series of potluck eat-ins across the country to draw attention to the lack of healthy and inexpensive public school meals. The San Francisco installment focuses on the Child Nutrition Act, which aims to improve nutritional standards. **(Huston)**

Noon-3 p.m.; bring one dish to share, a plate and utensils (RSVP requested) Civic Center Plaza, SF (650) 589-SLOW [www.slowfoodsancisco.com/schoolslunch](http://www.slowfoodsancisco.com/schoolslunch)

TUESDAY  
SEPT. 8

VISUAL ART

*"There's a Mystery There: Sendak on Sendak"*

Few illustrators conjure alternate realities with the virtuosity of Maurice Sendak. He guides his readership into fantastic landscapes and charges them with an enigmatic dynamism that keeps us returning with fresh eyes. In tribute to Sendak's work and life, the Contemporary Jewish Museum has organized an ambitious retrospective that highlights more than 40 of his books, including original watercolors, sketches, drawings, and draft editions.

Interactive video displays explore Sendak's personal stories and views on his art. This fall brings a feature film adaptation of Sendak's most celebrated work, 1963's *Where The Wild Things Are*, so now is a great time to revisit his gripping catalog. **(Krimper)**

11 a.m.–5 p.m. (continues through Jan. 19, 2010), \$8-10 (children free) Contemporary Jewish Museum 736 Mission St., SF (415) 655-7800 [www.thecjm.org](http://www.thecjm.org)

The *Guardian* listings deadline is two weeks prior to our Wednesday publication date. To submit an item for consideration, please include the title of the event, a brief description of the event, date and time, venue name, street address (listing cross streets only isn't sufficient), city, telephone number readers can call for more information, telephone number for media, and admission costs. Send information to Listings, the Guardian Building, 135 Mississippi St., SF, CA 94107; fax to (415) 487-2506; or e-mail (paste press release into e-mail body — no text attachments, please) to [listings@sfbg.com](mailto:listings@sfbg.com). We cannot guarantee the return of photos, but enclosing an SASE helps. Digital photos may be submitted in jpeg format; the image must be at least 240 dpi and four inches by six inches in size. We regret we cannot accept listings over the phone.

(1) Mos Def (see Thurs/3); (2) author Rebecca Solnit (see Wed/2); (3) Sabertooth Zombie (see Sat/5); (4) Léa Seydoux and Grégoire Leprince-Ringuet in *The Beautiful Person* (see Fri/4); (5) Jucifer (see Thurs/3); (6) Theatre of Yugen's *Helen Keller* (see Fri/4); (7) pen and ink and watercolor drawing from Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (see Tues/8); (8) Ryan Coffey with a collage (see Thurs/3) (9) *Two Farrahs* by Alika Cooper (see Thurs/3).

HELEN KELLER PHOTO BY FAYE CHAO; PHOTO OF RYAN COFFEY BY ALAN BAMBERGER OF ARTBUSINESS.COM; ALIKA COOPER PAINTING COURTESY OF MARK WOLFE CONTEMPORARY ART



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trash pop culture news, notes, and reviews

# American hardcore

**X-RATED CLASSICS** A sex-ploitation lifer who reportedly has directed so many features even he doesn't know how many, Joe Sarno is nonetheless also enough of an idiosyncratic talent to have won a cult following and some high-culture-institution retrospectives. No education in psychotronic cinema is complete without the likes of 1962's *Sin in the Suburbs*, a B&W exposé of swinger "bottle parties" that defines just how lurid movies could seem before they were actually allowed to show anything, and 1972's *Young Playthings*, the rare erotic film one might — even must — call "Pirandello-esque."

Though he confessed to being shocked at first, Sarno didn't blink in making the transition from softcore to hardcore, though his output finally slowed in the '80s. Alternative Cinema has taken on the task of releasing as much of this voluminous oeuvre as possible to DVD, including some films long thought lost. (They also induced his filmmaking return — at age 83! — via 2004's *Suburban Secrets*.)

The latest releases represent both his 1960s monochrome melodrama period and a mid-1970s sojourn into goofy sex comedies, the latter often available in "hard" and "soft" versions. Shoestring 1968 production *All the Sins of Sodom* was shot when "adults only" films could expose breasts, but nothing more beyond a lot of sexy (albeit nonprofane) situations and talk — which fortunately Sarno was most excellent at writing.

Nudes photographer Henning gets involved with several models while obsessively searching for a particular "look." He urges them on, shouting things like "More feeling! More EVIL!" à la Austin Powers. Purportedly shot over a long weekend, its cast names never even recorded, it's a claustrophobic weirdie recalling such exploitation zeniths as Roger Corman's *Teenage Doll* (1957) and Andy Milligan's *Fleshpot on 42nd St* (1973).

Its gorgeous widescreen B&W restoration stands opposed to three-color features on the Deep Throat Sex Comedy Collection. Their visual quality (and variably complete edits) underline the ephemeral nature of movies often sporadically released at best originally, and that no one thought to "preserve." The headline attraction, *Deep Throat II*, was a spectacular 1974 flop inac-



cessible even to bootleggers until now. It reunited the original "porn chic" smash's stars Linda Lovelace and Harry Reems — albeit in an aggressively dumb, atypically amateur (for Sarno) espionage spoof nobody liked. Dubious authority Al Goldstein called it "the worst movie ever made" because it committed the ultimate sin of omitting all graphic sex, even Linda's signature oral party trick. (Rumors persisted for years that hardcore scenes were shot, then lost, in a lab fire.)

The other two Sex Comedy inclusions are equally rare but more rewarding. Likewise featuring a range of famous vintage porn stars, *The Switch, Or How To Alter Your Ego* and *A Touch of Genie* (both from 1974) each have their own inimitable softcore charms. Female Jekyll/Hyde spin *Switch* debuts long-term Sarno fave Mary Mendum as a scientific researcher whose formula turns her from unconvincing Plain Jane into a raving beauty who perpetually arouses others, male and female. Starting out in a burlesque-humor mode, it gets surprisingly darker as it goes along.

*Genie* is about Melvin Finklefarb, a Woody Allen-like nebbish granted five wishes by a junkshop's bottled Barbara Eden aspirant. In one "wish," he's Harry Reems. Evidently video-transferred *Switch* comes with mysterious (Danish?) subtitles; *Genie*'s 35mm source is streaked and spotted. Apparently no better prints exist. Particularly ingratiating are Sarno's invariably kind recollections in the extras — either he never met a performer he didn't like, or they all liked him enough to be on their best behavior. **(Dennis Harvey)**

[www.alternativecinema.com](http://www.alternativecinema.com)



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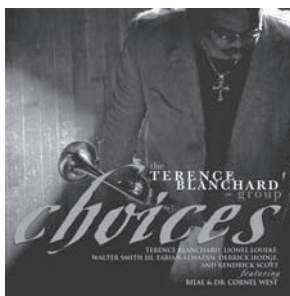
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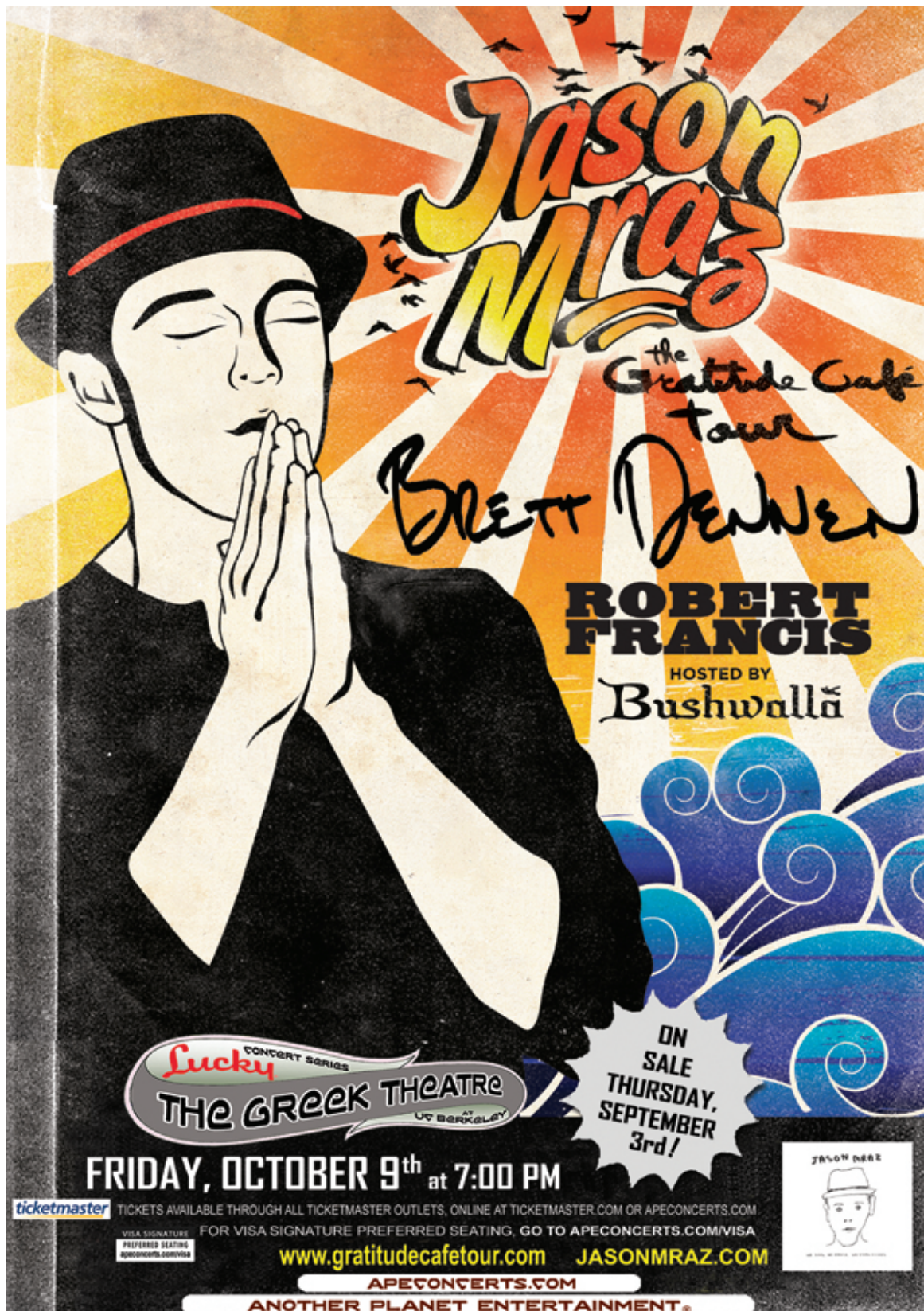


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# music

Children, know your metal past, present, and future: Black Cobra (left) is ready to strike. The latest of many pieces of evidence that 2009 is possessed by the spirit of 1989 comes in the form of *Death Control*, a song collection by the enigmatic Christopher Curtis Smith, also known as Night Control.

BLACK COBRA PHOTO BY SHANNON CORR



## History today

Black Cobra provide irrefutable evidence of underground metal circa-2009

By Tony Papanikolas  
a&eletters@sfbg.com

**TREATISE** If, 20 years from now, recumbent in your easy chair with your slippers and favorite bong, some snot-nosed younger sibling should ask you about the zeitgeist of late '00s underground metal (apparently the kid took an art history class), you might consider introducing the shaver to San Francisco's Black Cobra, a two-piece that almost certainly could not exist at any other point in time.

From the tarry primordial soup of Cobra's cavernous low-end emerge the various slimy, naked hallmarks of an increasingly protean metal scene — unapologetic Sleep worship, reverent nods to punk and hardcore cross-pollination, and a healthy dash of retro-metal swagger inform the band's gargantuan riffs. Nothing about this approach feels like it's been calculated for maximum relevance; instead, Black Cobra's molasses-thick sound comes off as the happy end result of two longtime fans who

came to the conclusion that they could, and should, create the music they wanted to hear. And while the band — Jason Landrian on guitar/vox, and Rafael Martinez on drums — has become more professional-sounding over the course of three full-length releases, the same caustic resin hit of recklessness permeates their newer material.

Black Cobra may not be High on Fire-monumental, or as thought provoking as Stephen O'Malley's latest art-drone opus. But if nothing else, Landrian and Martinez are doing their part to wrestle metal from the clutches of lifeless robo-shredders, and making some damn heavy music in the process. **SFBG**

### BLACK COBRA

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**NIGHTDREAM NATION** New waves — or should one say Wavves? — of noise pop keep arriving this year. The latest one to splash up against my ears is also undoubtedly one of the best. Night Control's debut album *Death Control* (Kill Shaman) is the type of recording that keeps on giving, thanks in part to the fact that its stylistic breadth matches its great length. Over the course of 19 songs and around 75 minutes, Christopher Curtis Smith traverses tremolo-laden terrain, distorted rave-ups, and synth-laden space ballads, with the occasional movie-of-your-mind instrumental passage thrown in for maximum seduction. The result is equally great to listen to on headphones or while shooting the shit with friends.

Listening to Smith's ultra-vivid scenes, it's hard not wonder if 2009 has been possessed by the spirit of 1989, as if that year's pinnacles of youthful dream pop birthed sonic babies coming of age today. The likes of Wavves, Crystal Stilts, Crocodiles, Kurt Vile, and even the more commercially appealing Girls all have obvious ties to 20 years ago, and Night Control is no different. Like Vile in particular, Smith's project also has the droll, play-it-cool, literally distant vocal and instrumental shadings of Flying Nun bands such as the Chills and the Clean — another vogue revival sound of the moment. Add in the fact that *control* is a word with currency, thanks to Blues Control, and it all might seem too perfectly with it. The thing is, Smith's music is more evocative if not downright emotionally potent than all the aforementioned groups. The lore around *Death Control* is that it's just a small sample from years of recordings that Smith either kept to himself or self-released under the name Crystal Shards. It's believable when you hear these obsessive tunes that in turn hypnotize you into obsessive listening.

It's all a pleasurable puzzle, a bit like *Death Control*'s soft focus cover image, a public bathroom mirror self-portrait by Smith that looks as if it was taken with an iPhone held just right to completely block out his facial features. Connected to disposable technology, artfully generic, and yet enigmatic — that's Night Control. **(Johnny Ray Huston)**



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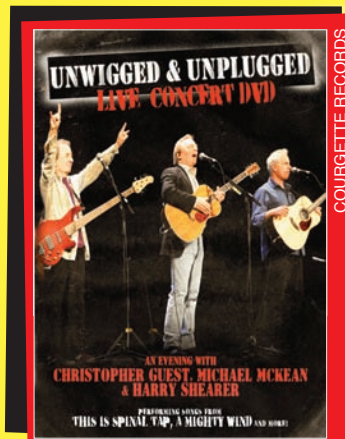
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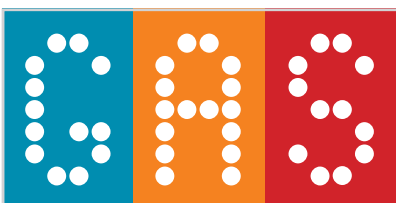
Swirling noise-loving Brooklynites the Vivian Girls' new album is darker and moodier than their previous work. That said, the influences remain the same; Ramones, '60s girl groups, surf, and indie pop. Out 9/8. LP available for \$11.98.



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# I heard a tumor

## Ganglians work together to create happy accidents and sound out dreamy intent

By Michelle Broder Van Dyke  
a&eletters@sfbg.com

**INTERVIEW** Sacramento quartet Ganglians daydreams blissed-out harmonies — ones made hazy by distortion. As its sun-kissed psych-pop sounds become garbled, the band creates a prismatic realm, a sonic state of being somewhere between waking and dreaming. This polychromatic province, where myoclonic twitches and hypnotic jerks occur, is conjured by variations between fuzzy, thermal jams and abstract, pensive chants.

Vocalist-guitarist Ryan Grubbs grew up in Bozeman, Mont. In 2006, he moved to Sactown after visiting the state capitol with his grandfather, who was attending a big horn sheep convention. Guitarist Kyle Hoover, drummer Alex Sowles, and bassist Adrian Comenzind all grew up in Sac and jammed together in Comenzind's attic.

"Ryan worked down the street from that attic and when he'd walk home, he could hear us playing," says Sowles, explaining the band's serendipitous formation. "Ryan had a show lined up and he asked us if we wanted to play with him. It just kinda worked out." After a pause he adds: "And then there was a car crash right in front of the venue that we played at ..." Hoover, Grubbs, and Sowles rally back and forth about the group's chemistry, which "wasn't actually all there at first," before concluding that "the chemistry was there, but we weren't exactly sure how to pull it off."

In biology, clusters of cells perform the same function within a ganglion — for instance, dorsal root ganglia relay sensory information from the skin to the spine. This process is a metaphor for the band's rapid maturity: progressing from the first show, which was an interpretation of Grubbs' solo work, to the chemistry-click when the members began writing songs together (and finishing each other's sentences).

It all makes sense, except: the plural of ganglion is ganglia, and the band's choice of name has nothing to do with the neurological term. Instead, Ganglians is a haphazard smooshing together of words. "Mostly I just liked aliens, and a gang of aliens, so I thought

of ganglians," says Grubbs. "I had never heard of it before, so it sounded really cool, mysterious and iconic. I found out later it was a cyst or something, spelled a little differently, which is cool because that's kinda weird and it's like a bundle of nerves, and nerves are all about perceiving things and stuff. It worked out perfectly, I guess."



**Dream a weird little psych-pop dream with Ganglians, who allow randomness and attention to detail to entwine, bringing great pride to Sacramento in the process.**

Ultimately, the randomness of Ganglians' name, and how it came into being, is probably a much better metaphor for how the band operates. Its two releases to date, a self-titled EP (Woodsist) and *Monster Head Room* (Woodsist/Weird Force), were released almost simultaneously. The EP came out first, but features many songs written after those on *Monster Head Room*. The latter "was more of a production thing," says Sowles. Or as Grubbs put it, "It was a labor of love, we really nourished it." *Monster Head Room*'s relative polish is illustrated by re-recordings two tracks of "The Void" and "Candy Girl" from Ganglians' self-titled release.

Ganglians usually build songs around a melody. Grubbs often finds his during a "mindless" and "routine" job as a busser/server at a sushi restaurant. "I just go into this trance," he says. "Then I'll run into the bathroom and record a little snippet off of a melody on my phone."

After piecing together Grubbs'

cell phone recordings, the band jams for a while, with each member contributing different ingredients for the song. Most contributions are based upon a theme or an idea, such as sounding like a forest, or like being underwater, or trying to conjure the feeling of a journey.

Grubbs' lyrics spring forth from themes and sounds, as in "Valient Brave," from *Monster Head Room*. "From its rhythm-guitar," says Grubbs, "I knew it was going to be a war chant." Grubbs also builds lyrics around vowel sounds, as is evident in his use of slant rhyme: the same album's "Cryin Smoke," for example, pairs "pasture" with "bathroom."

### PLAYLIST

#### AIR FRANCE

**No Way Down EP**  
(Sincerely Yours)

With the Honeydrips, Tough Alliance, jj, and this group, the Sincerely Yours label has established itself as Sweden's chief castle of indie pop. "Collapsing at Your Doorstep" and "No Excuses" could be outtakes from Saint Etienne's *Foxbase Alpha* (Heavenly, 1991), and ain't nothing wrong with that. **(Johnny Ray Huston)**

#### PICTUREPLANE

**Dark Rift**  
(Lovepump United)

Tweaker pop from Denver's Travis Egedy, this crystal cathedral of sound will have you trying out '80s new romantic dances in its prismatic mirrors. Industrial-tinged but quite melodic, it creates panicky backing vox from split-second samples of girl pop — Kylie Minogue, is that you, ABBA, and Stevie Nicks trapped *Poltergeist*-like in "Goth Star"'s spectral tunnel? — while invoking boys in makeup. **(Huston)**

#### FAMOUS L. RENFROE (AS THE FLYING SWEET ANGEL OF JOY)

**Children**  
(Fat Possum)

Gospel that's a knockout contender of blues album of the year, flying right into your heart from the first refrain. Written and recorded by one man — as possessed by an angel — in 1969, these 12 tracks would have made the Rolling Stones of the time green with envy instead of moss. Famous L. Renfroe, you are as great as your name. **(Huston)**

#### 24-CARAT BLACK

**Gone: The Promises of Yesterday**  
(Numero Group)

The title here rings all too true: 24-Carat Black is a memento of all that soul music could have been, had economic woes not killed its most ambitious tendrils. This dozen-plus ensemble's unfinished sequel to 1975's oft-sampled *Ghetto: Misfortune's Wealth* (Stax) is just as conceptual, but more downtempo. "The Best of Good Love Gone" is Dusty in the ghetto instead of a satin Memphis boudoir. "I Want to Make Up" does a slow burn then floats off in the nighttime breeze. **(Huston)**

#### THE XX

**The xx**  
(Young Turks)

A sublime entanglement of negative space, lithesome riffs, and raw sentiment delivered by mush-mouthed lead vocalists Romy Madley Croft and Oliver Sims, this xx-cellent debut by the young rock quartet gleams the post-everything cube. **(Marke B.)**

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# Cass' corridors

McCombs navigates lovely mazes — or *Catacombs* — of meaning, until they implode

By **Brandon Bussolini**  
a&cletters@sfbg.com

**SONGWRITING** Cass McCombs writes songs that feel like walking into a trap. It's clear that the quasi-itinerant singer-songwriter — an old-fashioned term that seems to fit him well — is more aware of genre than the average indie troubadour, which makes his songs easy to enter but difficult to penetrate or exit. His music is not of the confessional variety, though it is indirectly personal. String together the titles that make up his discography and you get some sense of how his coded, morphing symbols approximate but never equal the biographical C.M.: *A* (4AD, 2003), *PREfection* (2005), *Dropping The Writ* (Domino, 2007), and *Catacombs* (2009). And that's not even getting to his lyrics, which go about the work of making meaning and then suddenly self-cancel or erupt with the real.

"You Saved My Life," from McCombs' most recent and accomplished record, is a career apogee in this respect. A swooning lap steel and big blunt snare do much of the heavy lifting to make the tune eminently mixtapeable, but the gratitude suggested by the title is troubled by the hard pivoting action of the phrase,

"And I can't blame you enough," and the wobbly delivery of "Blood to gulp and flesh to eat." McCombs' canniness has little to do with word games or enigma-baiting, though: McCombs may as well have wandered into the singer-songwriter room after a childhood spent listening to mersey rap radio and simply and unfussily picked up on forms he found useful. McCombs' music may be especially NPR-ready now, with the worn denim elbows of his current queasy Americana overtaking the Smiths/4AD dazzle that held sway over *PREfection* and surfaced on *Dropping The Writ*. Yet in comparison to a The Band-ripping band like Deer Tick, everything about McCombs' music remains to be said.

One of McCombs' strengths is the ability to modulate through moods over the course of an album while demanding a kind of deep semantic listening unusual in indie rock. Particularly with *Catacombs*, one gets the sense that Cass is a born Album Artist, the sort of person who understands the virtues of patience and can shear off the highs of his hits while packing filler with unexpected content. Though the quasi-punning *Catacombs* comes front-loaded with his most affecting tracks and ends with somewhat disposable, self-

consciously lighter fare like "Jonesy Boy" and "One Way to Go," the relations between parts makes it difficult to skip over in-between jams like "Harmonia" and "My Sister, My Spouse." It helps, too, that these little coves of patience — a formalist's trademark — tend to be where he tries out some of his stringier lyrical ideas.

"This is what happens when a leitmotif implodes," McCombs sings on "Lionkiller Got Married," a sequel to *Dropping The Writ*'s opening track and personal standard of sorts, "Lionkiller." He could be explaining his own approach to autobiography with the line. It just may be that his subject matter is as much the act of making sense — as much about the point where the line falls off the page — as it is about the sense he's making. None of it measures up to, say, Dylan-level fibs or automythology, but it serves an important purpose: you never get the feeling that there's a straight line from McCombs' intentions to your reception. This is not a dude in your living room relaying earthy, relatable feelings through his acoustic guitar.

It'd be a bit much to call McCombs an antihumanist, though: whatever slipperiness he manifests stems from a healthy distrust of



**Cass McCombs knows how to execute a song without killing it. That's another way of saying there are no escapes from the open-ended meanings of the best compositions on his latest album, *Catacombs*.**

settled meanings rather than a need to assert his control over his audience. Not to discount, either, that some of his contradictions seem to stem from guilelessness. That McCombs is clearly having fun even when he appears to be dead serious — as with "The Executioner's Song," say — sets his kind of innocence apart from the standard journo narratives of indie rock discovery. As great as Bon Iver's *For Emma, Forever Ago* (Jagjaguwar, 2007) is, it will never live down the "dude goes into the forest and records awesome bummr breakup album" rap that's stamped across it, for the foreseeable future, like a "The Nice Price" sticker.

But McCombs' mercurial self-presentation seems less like the stamp of a "truer" authenticity than Bon Iver's than a sustained parry of that terrible word. Not to forget, either,

that *Catacombs* has been lauded in *Vice* and given Pitchfork's Best New Music designation. Whether or not we've fussed our way into being able to describe what makes McCombs' music so difficult to digest, there's something tough and unyielding at its center. Partly I wonder whether this is what rock would sound like without Pavement, but mostly I listen. When it hits wrong, the boredom is palpable. But just as often *Catacombs* conveys the bottom falling out of meaning in gorgeous slow motion. **SFBG**

## CASS MCCOMBS

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## DREAMS COME TRUE: A DUET BETWEEN CASS MCCOMBS AND KAREN BLACK

**DUAL INTERVIEWS** Cass McCombs and Karen Black — not exactly Marvin and Tammi, or Elton or Kiki, or Waylon or Tammy, but undeniably classic from the very first listen. "Dreams-Come-True Girl" kicks off McCombs' new album *Catacombs* (Domino) in style, immediately staking a claim for song of the year.

The partnership between McCombs and Black seems made in heaven — a strange heaven. It turns out that it was born from friendship: specifically, Black's friendship with McCombs' frequent collaborator Aaron Brown, who has created some of McCombs' cover art and directed his music videos; and Black's and Brown's friendship with Bay Area filmmaker Rob Nilsson. "Rob introduced me to Aaron, and we just hit it off," Black relates via phone from Macon, Georgia, where she's auditioning actors for a play she's written called *Missouri Waltz*. "I invited him to have breakfast. Then one day he said, *Listen, my friend Cass is cutting a CD next Tuesday, why don't you come by and sing with him?* That's all I knew. I just did it because of the trust I had in Aaron, and my opinion of Aaron."

Black's trust is a reward to McCombs and the listener. Beginning in Buddy Holly territory, "Dreams-Come-True Girl" moves handsomely through contemplative passages before Black arrives. It isn't an overstatement to say that she turns in a country-rock grand dame performance worthy of a Wynette or Loretta Lynn while very much putting her distinct stamp on the song, switching from sublime siren calls to comic dance



**"He's just the darlinest boy": the incomparable Karen Black happily sings the praises of her duet partner, Cass McCombs.**

requests on a dime. "She's just a gas," McCombs says admiringly from Los Angeles. "Out jaws were on the floor as she was riffing. She was in control. It was amazing to watch, and pretty inspiring."

Anyone lucky enough to have seen Black move from Bessie Smith to Katherine Anne Porter with graceful unease in her one-woman show knows that her musical performances in 1970's *Five Easy Pieces* and 1975's *Nashville* — two of McCombs' favorite Black movies — merely hint at her vocal

range and interpretive ability. Considering songwriters such as Dean Wareham have covered Black's compositions, it's bizarre that there isn't a full-length Karen Black recording. Fortunately, producer Ariel Rechtshaid and McCombs are looking to remedy that situation next year.

For now, Black is busy with the usual amazing array of projects, ranging from plays (readings of her *Mama at Midnight* have been put on in L.A. and New York City) to new movies (*The Blue Tooth Virgin*; a bit part in Alex Cox's *Repo Man* sequel *Repo Chick*) and an HBO pilot (*Magical Balloon*) by the people behind *Tim and Eric Awesome Show*.

As for McCombs and Black in "Dream-Come-True Girl," their relationship continues to bloom with each new performance. "The two characters have evolved," says McCombs. "Her character is reaching out to mine and saying *C'mon, let's go! It's Saturday, let's go out and have some fun!* My character defuses the situation and looks away. It's easy for both of us to do those roles. It comes naturally" — he laughs — "I suppose."

"You know, I'm no dream girl," Black says coyly. "But he's so cute. They said, *Come and dance for hours in your three-inch heels*, and I said, *Well, let's try it*. It turned out that I could do what the song was leading us to do, which was sort of flirt with him, sort of think about him, and sort of feel ridiculous because I shouldn't be thinking about a young man like that. He's so cute lookin'. He's just the darlinest boy." (**Johnny Ray Huston**)



**Boss bashes for your three-day weekend BART attack: (clockwise from top left) Ellen Ferrato gets Blessed, White Girl Lust peep in on Studio SF, Ryan Twilight joins the Dub Mission, and Geneva's Agnès rides the peaks.**



## Werk

By Marke B.  
markeb@sfbg.com

**SUPER EGO** Things I'm loving so much lately, besides the way your new used shoes go with your new used hair: The awesome trip-

disco movement, with the Lamb + Wolf and Soul Clap duos in the lead — dig Soul Clap's "Great White Hope IV" mix at [www.wolfandlambmusic.com](http://www.wolfandlambmusic.com) — which fills out classic soul and R&B slabs with subtle, supple laptop hijinks. Young SF queen Chastity Belle wholeheartedly reviving old-school Liza, Sondheim, and Showgirls drag histrionics — frighteningly accurate! The new Spanish-German techno, revealed by the likes of Edu Imbernon, Coyu, and Niconé, which harnesses minimal techno and microhouse knob-tweaks to ethereal samba and salsa beats. And my favorite thing ever? BART runs all night on Labor Day weekend, so we can work it out on both sides of the Bay quickly, tip-sily, and conveniently. Tube it, baby.

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### ► GEMINI DISCO

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### ► DUB MISSION

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### ► SIXXTEEN

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On the eve of a new album release, comedian Brent Weinbach peels off one layer to reveal the Weinbach within. Traveling man Al Green seems to think it's funny, while Jonesin' prepares for tour by taunting gravity with some aerobics. | BRENT WEINBACH PHOTO BY SETH OLENICK



## Taxi cab confessions

By Kimberly Chun  
a&eletters@sfbg.com

**SONIC REDUCER** We all have fantasies, and considering the fact that he happily goes to the sick, hilarious places only you and your silliest, closest pals

go, comedian Brent Weinbach's is remarkably simple. He'd love to drive you ... no, not insane, but around in a cab. Of course, when the dream sort of came true — he got to tool around with a cabbie-curator for "Where to," a 2007 art show of taxi-related art at the Lab — one bubble was brutally burst, spurring a joke, of sorts.

"Not a lot of people got it," confesses the longtime SF comedian, now based in his native Los Angeles and back in town for his Outside Lands fest performances. In the cab, he says, "I met a wide variety of people: I met two yuppie girls, a yuppie guy, and more yuppies — and a stripper. A yuppie stripper.

"The point was," Weinbach continues, "I thought it was going to be more like New York City, where all kinds of people take cabs. But that's really what it was — a bunch of yuppies and a stripper. It turns out the only people who ride around in taxis in San Francisco are yuppies."

A disappointingly homogenous experience for a comic who has found

plenty of very specific and strange black, queer, Chinese, Russian, Mexican, and just plain twisted voices to filter through his hilariously stiff, straight-guy comic persona — and despite the perk that, as a Travis Bickle manque, one would have a captive audience in the backseat. Still, cabbieing it provided a theme of sorts for the wildly diverse array of live performance recordings, studio-recorded skits, and Weinbach-penned tunes and video game-inspired backing sounds making up the comedian's second album, *The Night Shift* (Talent Moat), the focus of a release show at the Verdi Club on Sept. 11. Weinbach sib and comedy co-conspirator Laura of Foxtail Brigade opens, along with Moshe Kasher and Alex Koll.

The tunes on *Night Shift* are a new touch, setting me off on a day-dream about Weinbach doing the duelin' piano (and laughs) routine with Zach Galifianakis. (Weinbach once teased the ivories professionally in the lobby of Union Square hotels like the Mark Hopkins.) "Sometimes I close my set with one of those songs," Weinbach says. "After hearing the word 'penis' a bunch of times and talking about poo-poo, it's kind of funny to end the set with a sweet old-fashioned song." He worries, though, about the track-by-track re-creation of the album at the Verdi Club: "I hope they don't kill the momentum

of the set."

Yet Weinbach is game — the ex-Oakland substitute teacher has had to be (memories of the letter from a student apologizing for calling him a "bitch" ghost-ride by). He dives into a rapid-fire, impassioned discussion of his comedy, which rarely discusses race directly, yet clearly emerges from the mashed-up, pop sensibility of a half-Filipino, half-Jewish Left Coast kid.

"The only time I've ever talked about race is right after the presidential election, when I wrote this: 'On Nov. 4, 2008, history was made' ... — I usually get a little applause here — 'It was a remarkable thing to see so much of the black community come together and deny gay people their civil rights. So now that the black man is keeping the gay man down, that means gay is the new black. And that means suburban teenagers will have to get used to a whole new way of acting cool.'"

Weinbach pauses, then explains heatedly, "I was really upset that 70 percent of black voters in California voted against gay marriage, when this whole election was about getting a black president into office. It just blew my mind." As for the joke itself, well, "It gets a good response, though sometimes people think I'm making fun of gay people or black people. I don't even know what's going through their head, actually. I do remember

doing the joke once and hearing people hissing. It was like, 'What are you hissing at? Are you glad gay people were denied their rights or are you a snake?' And if you're a snake, that's OK ... " **SFBG**

### BRENT WEINBACH

Sept. 11, 8 p.m., \$10-\$12  
Verdi Club  
2424 Mariposa, SF  
www.brownpapertickets.com/  
event/72659

### ROMANCING THE STACKS

#### JONESIN'

The cute couple loves their bubblegum and Casio-pop on *Hi, We're Jonesin'* (Telemarketer's Worst Nightmare). Thurs/3, 9 p.m., \$6. Hemlock Tavern, 1131 Polk, SF. www.hemlocktavern.com

#### AL GREEN

The rev has his finger on the holy trigger. Wed/2, 8 p.m., \$56-\$85. Warfield, 982 Market, SF. www.goldenvoice.com

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## Davila 666, Mannequin Men, NoBunny, Bridez

► **PREVIEW** Working its way through the ranks of punk rock's prestigious pantheon, Puerto Rico's Davila 666 is held in the same regard as King Khan and Black Lips, even sounding kinda Ramones-ish at times. Its debut self-titled release is on the label that can do no wrong, In the Red. Expect an onslaught of guitar fuzz, jangle, and theatrics, sung entirely *en Español!*

Co-headlining for the night is the Midwest's own Mannequin Men. With a fresh summer release under their belt, *Lose Your Illusion* (Flameshovel), the boys take time out from "professionally" DJ-ing various Chicago bars and clubs to join the tour. According to the guy who books them, they like to spin in their downtime. Notorious for having an appetite for destruction all their own, the quartet should be in rare form on stage. They have a song called "WTF LOL" dedicated to the kids and their computer lingo. At first I wasn't sure if I should be annoyed or amused. I'll let you be the judge.

Not to be outdone, Oakland's nomadic NoBunny is East Bay garage rock's answer to the Jim Henson-esque perverse puppets from the 1989 film *Meet the Feebles*. The sleaze rocker's mangy Muppet-like mask probably smells as rotten as it looks. But it's his sound that's oh so sweet. He's got a soft spot for oldies and does campy, quirky lo-fi homages. Check out his filthiness, cuz he'll (probably) sing in his undies. In contrast, SF's Bridez will add a "lady's" touch to the evening. It's hard to imagine the walls of Thee (tiny) Parkside containing all this rawk. Somehow I think it'll manage. **(Andre Torrez)**

**DAVILA 666, MANNEQUIN MEN, NOBUNNY, BRIDEZ** Copresented by Thee

Parkside and KUSF. Wed/2, 8 p.m., \$10, 21 and over. Thee Parkside, 1600 17th St., SF. (415) 252-1330. [www.theeparkside.com](http://www.theeparkside.com)

Music listings are compiled by Paula Connelly and Cheryl Eddy. Since club life is unpredictable, it's a good idea to call ahead to confirm bookings and hours. Prices are listed when provided to us. Submit items for the listings at [lists@sfbg.com](mailto:lists@sfbg.com). For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

## WEDNESDAY 2

### ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**Boylion, Shovelman, James Michael and the Lower Case Letters** Hotel Utah. 8pm, \$7.  
**Bye Bye Blackbirds, Rhubarb Whiskey, Billy Boys** El Rio. 8pm, \$5.  
**Davila 666, Mannequin Men, No Bunny, Bridez** Thee Parkside. 8pm, \$10.  
**Mike Donovan, Douglas Armour, Banaya Papaya** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$6.

► **Enforcer, Slough Feg, Cauldron, Holy Grail** Annie's Social Club. 8pm, \$10.

► **Al Green, Orgone** Warfield. 8pm, \$56-85.

**Derick Hughes** Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$15.  
**Eric Lindell** Coda. 9pm, \$20.  
**Mitchel Musso, KSM, Jimmy Robbins** Slim's. 7pm, \$20.

**Nels Cline Singers, Ava Mendoza** Café du Nord. 9:30pm, \$14.

**Papa Grows Funk Boom Boom Room**. 10pm, \$15.  
**Shakewell, Paula O'Rourke and the Scarlett Bellows, SugarButtTiger** Red Devil Lounge. 8pm, \$8.

**Skeelo, Paulie Rhyme, Bonus Traxx** Elbo Room. 9pm, \$20.

**BAY AREA**  
**Def Leppard, Poison, Cheap Trick** Shoreline Amphitheater, One Amphitheater Pkwy, Mtn View; [www.livenation.com](http://www.livenation.com). 7pm, \$55.50-131.

### JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Ben Marcato and the Mondo Combo** Top of the Mark. 7:30pm, \$10.

**Cat's Corner** Savanna Jazz. 7pm, \$5-10.

**8 Legged Monster** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, \$14.

**Lisa Mezzacappa's Bait and Switch, John Shiurba's 5x5** Climate Theater, 285 Ninth St, SF; (415) 704-3260. 8pm, \$7-15.

**Shotgun Wedding** Yoshi's San Francisco. 10pm, \$14.

**Tin Cup Serenade** Le Colonial, 20 Cosmo Place, SF; (415) 931-3600. 7pm, free.

### FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**Bluegrass Country Jam** Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.

**Freddie Clarke** Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8 and 9:30pm; \$12.

**Los Diablos de Amor** Rasselas Jazz. 8pm, free.

### DANCE CLUBS

**Afreaka!** Attic, 3336 24th St; [souljazz45@gmail.com](mailto:souljazz45@gmail.com). 10pm, free. Psychedelic beats from

CONTINUES ON PAGE 28 »

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9/3

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SATURDAY  
9/5

### LEISURE

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SUNDAY  
9/6

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No Cover

WEDNESDAY  
9/8

### COO-YAH!

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## MUSIC

### WED/2 DANCE CLUBS CONT>>

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**Booty Call** Q-Bar, 456 Castro; www.bootycallwednesdays.com. 9pm. Juanita Moore hosts this dance party, featuring DJ Robot Hustle.

**Hands Down!** Bar on Church. 9pm, free. With DJs Claksaarb, Mykill, and guests spinning indie, electro, house, and bangers.

**Hump Night** Elbo Room. 9pm, \$5. The week's half over — bump it out at Hump Night! **Jam Wednesday** Infusion Lounge. 10pm, free. DJ Slick Dee.

**Qoöl** 111 Minna Gallery. 5-10pm, \$5. Pan-

techno lounge with DJs Spesh, Gil, Hyper D, and Jondi.

**RedWine Social** Dalva. 9pm-2am, free. DJ TophOne and guests spin outernational funk and get drunk.

**Respect Wednesdays** End Up. 10pm, \$5. Rotating DJs Lonestar Sound, Young Fyah, Sake One, Serg, and more spinning reggae, dancehall, roots, lovers rock, and mash ups.

**Synchronize II** Pirata, 2007 16th St.; (415) 626-2626. 10pm, free. Psychedelic dance music with DJs Helios, Gatto Matto, Psy Lotus, Intergalactoid, and guests.

### THURSDAY 3

#### ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**Answer, Sticks and Stones** Red Devil Lounge. 8pm, \$10.

**Black Quarterback** Coda. 9pm, \$7.

**Blue Rabbit, Kirk Hamilton Group, Conspiracy of Venus** Rickshaw Stop. 8pm, \$10.

**Brave Combo, Pine Box Boys** Slim's. 8:30pm, \$15.

**Heather Combs, Austin Willacy, Walty, Welcome Matt** Hotel Utah. 7:30pm, \$8.

**Greyhounds, Anthony Ferrell** Boom Boom Room. 10pm, \$8.

**Jonesin', Sandwiches, Hanni el Khatib** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$6.

**Jucifer, Grayceon, Flood** Annie's Social Club. 8pm, \$10.

**Mos Def, Erykah Badu, Jay Electronica** Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness, SF; www.livenation.com. 7:30pm.

**Nels Cline Singers, Ava Mendoza** Café du Nord. 8pm, \$14.

**Scene of Action, Fighting the Villain, Robots of Fury** Bottom of the Hill. 9pm, \$8.

**This is My Fist!, Airfix Kits, Robocop 3, Gunner** Thee Parkside. 9pm, \$5.

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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH 8PM \$15

(EXPERIMENTAL JAZZ)

#### THE SCOTT AMENDOLA TRIO

W/ JEFF PARKER AND JOHN SHIFFLET

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18TH 9:30PM \$10 (ROCK)

#### THE DRONES

MODEL/ACTRESS • THE SPYRALS

THE DUKE OF WINDSOR (DJ)

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Mon-Fri, 2-6pm



## A Palace to Match the Majesty of the High Holy Days

Please join the Kol Shofar Community  
for our 2009/5770 High Holy Day Services  
at the San Francisco Palace of Fine Arts!

#### EREV ROSH HASHANAH

Friday Sept. 18

8:00 PM—9:30 PM

#### ROSH HASHANAH DAY ONE

Saturday, Sept. 19

2:00 PM—5:00 PM

Children's Ed. Program:

2:00 PM—5:00 PM

#### ROSH HASHANAH DAY TWO

Sunday, Sept. 20

9:00 AM—1:00 PM

Family Service:

2:00 PM—3:00 PM

#### YOM KIPPUR—KOL NIDRE

Sunday, Sept. 27

6:45 PM—9:00 PM

#### YOM KIPPUR

Monday, Sept. 28

2:30 PM—5:00 PM

(Yizkor Service 3:15 PM)

Mincha/Neila 5:00 PM—7:37 PM

Children's Ed. Program:

2:30 PM—6:30 PM

Ticket prices: \$250

(includes all services.)

For security purposes  
each attendee will need  
their own ticket.

The Palace of Fine Arts

Theater is located at

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San Francisco.

Ample free parking in lot.

Ample free parking in lot.

Please call

415.388.1818

or email

sbrusman@kolshofar.org

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Congregation Kol Shofar • www.kolshofar.org

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6

GUARDIAN



**Unauthorized Rolling Stones** Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$15.

#### BAY AREA

**Deadbolt, Chop Tops, Thee Merry Widows, Switchblade Riot, DJ Wednzdai** Uptown. 8pm, \$12.

#### JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Eric Benet** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 and 10pm, \$35.

**Eric Kurtzrock Trio** Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli Square, 891 Beach, SF; (415) 771-6800. 7:30pm, free.

**"Full Moon Concert Series: Harvest Moon"** Luggage Store Gallery, 1007 Market, SF; www.luggagestoregallery.org. 8pm, \$6-10. With RTD3 and Gino Robair.

**Marlina Teich Trio** Brickhouse, 426 Brannan, SF; (415) 820-1595. 7-10pm, free.

**Stompy Jones** Top of the Mark. 7:30pm, \$10.

#### FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**Dark Hollow Band** Atlas Café. 8pm, free.  
**Flamenco Thursday** Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8 and 9:30pm, \$12. With Carola Zertuche and Company.  
**Shannon Céili Band** Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.

#### DANCE CLUBS

**Afrolicious** Elbo Room. 9:30pm, \$5-6. DJs Pleasuremaker, Señor Oz, J Elrod, and B Lee spin Afrobeat, Tropicália, electro, samba, and funk.

**Caribbean Connection** Little Baobab, 3388 19th St; 643-3558. 10pm, \$3. DJ Stevie B and guests spin reggae, soca, zouk, reggaetón, and more.

**Club Jammies** Edinburgh Castle. 10pm, free. DJs EBERrad and White Mice spinning reggae, punk, dub, and post punk.

**Drop the Pressure** Underground SF. 6-10pm, free. Electro, house, and datafunk highlight this weekly happy hour.

**Funky Rewind** Skylark. 9pm, free. DJ Kung Fu Chris, MAKossa, and rotating guest DJs spin heavy funk breaks, early hip-hop, boogie, and classic Jamaican riddims.

**Heat** Icon Ultra Lounge. 10pm, free. Hip-hop, R&B, reggae, and soul.

**Holy Thursday** Underground SF. 10pm, \$5. Bay Area electronic hip hop producers showcase their cutting edge styles monthly.

**Kick It** Bar on Church. 9pm. Hip-hop with DJ Jorge Terez.

**Koko Puffs** Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary; 885-4788. 10pm, free. Dubby roots reggae and Jamaican funk from rotating DJs.

**Lacquer** Beauty Bar. 10pm-2am, free. DJs Mario Muse and Miss Margo bring the electro.  
**Mestiza** Bollywood Café, 3376 19th St., SF; (415) 970-0362. 10pm, free. Showcasing progressive Latin and global beats with DJ Juan Data.

**Popscene** 330 Rich. 10pm, \$10. Rotating DJs spinning indie, Britpop, electro, new wave, and post-punk.

**Rock Candy** Stud. 9pm-2am, \$5. Luscious Lucy Lipps hosts this electro-punk-pop party with music by ReXick.

**Studio SF** Triple Crown. 9pm, \$5. Keeping the Disco vibe alive with authentic 70's, 80's, and current disco with DJs White Girl Lust, Ken Vulsion, and Sergio.

**Topa Top Thursdays** Club Six. 9pm, \$5. Jah Warrior, Jah Yzer, I-Vier, and Irie Dole spin the reggae jams for your maximum irie-ness.

## FRIDAY 4

### ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**Café R&B** Biscuits and Blues. 8 and 10pm, \$22.  
**Division Day, Bad Veins, LoveLikeFire** Café du Nord. 9:30pm, \$12.

**Drunk Horse, Green and Wood, Sea of Air** Knockout. 5-8:30pm, \$7.

**Foxtail Somersault, Color Turning, Tomihira, Tracing Figures** Red Devil Lounge. 8pm, \$10.

**Hatchet, Havoc, Brocus Helm, Laceration, DJ Rob Metal** Thee Parkside. 9pm, \$10.

**DJ Lebowitz** Madrone. 6-9pm, free.

**Mew, Funeral Party** Independent. 9pm, \$18.

**Neville Brothers, Dr. John** Regency Ballroom. 9pm, \$50.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 30 »

## Elbo Room

<b>THU</b> 9/3 9:30PM \$5 B4 11 \$6 AFTER	<b>AFRO-TROPI ELECTRIC- SAMBA-FUNK</b> <b>AFROLICIOUS</b> WITH DIS/HOSTS: <b>PLEASUREMAKER &amp; SENOR OZ,</b> PLUS RESIDENTS <b>J ELROD &amp; B LEE</b>
<b>FRI</b> 9/4 10PM \$10/12	ELBO ROOM PRESENTS <b>GARY WILSON AND THE BLIND DATES, JAMES PANTS</b> (LIVE BAND), <b>JEL</b> (ANTICON), <b>ODD NOSDAM</b> (ANTICON)
<b>SAT</b> 9/5 10PM \$10	SPINNING '60S SOUL 45'S <b>SATURDAY NIGHT SOUL PARTY</b> WITH DJs <b>LUCKY, PAUL PAUL, PHENGREN OSWALD</b> (\$5 DISCOUNT IN SEMI-FORMAL ATTIRE)
<b>SUN</b> 9/6 9PM \$12ADV \$15 DOOR	A BAY AREA EXCLUSIVE SHOW: <b>DUB MISSION'S 13TH ANNIVERSARY!</b> FEAT. <b>TWILIGHT CIRCUS DUB SOUND SYSTEM</b> AKA <b>RYAN MOORE</b> (M RECORDS/THE NETHERLANDS), <b>YOSSI FINE</b> (EX-CENTRIC SOUND SYSTEM/ISRAEL) AND <b>DJ SEP</b> \$12 ADVANCE/\$15 DOOR ADV: WWW.BROWNPAPERTICKETS.COM AND WWW.JAMBASSETICKETS.COM
<b>TUE</b> 9/8 9PM \$7	ELBO ROOM PRESENTS <b>LAURA CORTESE &amp; JEFFERSON HAMER THE SHALANTS</b>
<b>WED</b> 9/9 9PM \$5	ELBO ROOM PRESENTS <b>SUKI EWERS</b> (OF MAZZY STAR & OPEL), <b>JACK TUNG, WESTBROOKLIN</b> (FEATURING ANNIE LIN)

**UPCOMING**  
 THU 9/10 AFROLICIOUS  
 FRI 9/11 EARLY: LITERARY DEATH MATCH  
 LATE: TREAT 'EM RIGHT  
 SAT 9/12 TORMENTA TROPICAL: KINGDOM  
 SUN 9/13 DUB MISSION: DJ SEP  
 MON 9/14 POJAMA PEOPLE FEAT. IKE WILLIS  
 FRI 9/18 BROWNOUT / MANICATO  
 FRI 9/25 SLAVIC SOUL PARTY

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<b>WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2ND</b> "special engagement" <b>Alligator</b> recording artist <b>ERIC LINDELL</b> Blues/R&B \$5 DON Q RUM COCKTAILS ALL NIGHT!	9PM \$20
<b>THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD</b> <b>BLACK QUARTERBACK</b> (feat members of Broun Fellinis) Jazz/Funk	9PM \$7
<b>FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 4TH</b> <b>THE STRONG MOVE QUARTET</b> Jazz	10PM \$10
<b>SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5TH</b> <b>STEPPIN' FEAT. OSCAR MYERS</b> Jazz/Funk	10PM \$10
<b>SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6TH</b> Celebrate Brazilian Independence Day w/ <b>MUCHO AXE</b> Latin \$5 LEBLON COCKTAIL SPECIALS ALL NIGHT!	8PM \$7
<b>TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8TH</b> Jazz Mafia Tuesdays feat. <b>SPACEHEATER'S BLAST FURNACE</b> Jazz/Hip-Hop \$2 TRUMER PILS ALL NIGHT!	9:30PM \$7

**UPCOMING SHOWS**  
 9/9 B3 WEDNESDAYS FEAT. AMENDOLA VS. BLADES JAZZ 9PM  
 9/10 KENNY BROOKS JAZZ 9PM

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**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2ND**  
**WHORE FOR SATAN PRESENTS ENFORCER**  
 SLOUGH FEG  
 CAULDRON  
 HOLY GRAIL  
 AND DJ ROB METAL  
**DOORS 8PM / \$10 ADMISSION**

**THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 3**  
**PMR PRESENTS JUCIFER**  
 GRAYCEON  
 FLOOD  
 AND DJ FANBOY  
**DOORS 8PM / \$10 ADMISSION**

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 4TH**  
**PMR PRESENTS SMP**  
 (SOUNDS OF MASS PRODUCTION)  
 STIFF VALENTINE  
 SLAVE UNIT  
 AND DJs BLAU + MR. SMITH  
 + PUNK ROCK-N-SCHLOCK BACKROOM KARAOKE  
**DOORS 9PM / \$10 ADMISSION**

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5TH**  
**PMR PRESENTS HIGHTOWER**  
 EMERALDS  
 BOGUS TOKUS  
 SPACE VACATION  
 + PUNK ROCK-N-SCHLOCK BACKROOM KARAOKE  
**DOORS 9PM / \$7 ADMISSSION**

**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6TH**  
**ALCOHOLCAUST PRESENTS OLD GRANDAD**  
 FLOATING GOAT  
 PINS OF LIGHT  
 (MEMBERS OF HIGHTOWER / FLESHIES / DEAD AND GONE) AERIAL RUIN  
**DOORS 6PM / \$8 ADMISSION**

**MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7TH**  
 CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY

**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8TH**  
**OPEN MIC COMEDY IN THE BACKROOM**  
 SIGN UP @ SFSTANDUP.COM  
 6PM-9PM / NO COVER

**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8**  
**DRUNKEN MONKEY LOUNGE**  
 + PUNK ROCK-N-SCHLOCK BACKROOM KARAOKE  
 (FREE POOL / SHOT SPECIALS / \$1 HAMM'S)  
**9PM-2AM / NO COVER**

COMING SOON:  
 9/09: BARBARY COAST BURLESQUE  
 9/10: NECRITE, FELL VOICES  
 9/11: WELCOME HOME WALKER (HAPPY HOUR)  
 9/11: LOVEBUZZ: CLASSIC PUNK, ROCK, 90S

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**21 AND OVER WWW.TICKETWEB.COM**  
**MORE INFO: WWW.ANNIESSOCIALCLUB.COM**

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 Lunch Mon-Fri 11a-3p  
 Happy Hour Tues-Sat 4p-7p  
 Dinner Thurs-Sat 5:30p-10p

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# temple

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INLAND KNIGHTS

(Drop Music, UK)

SATURDAY 9.05.09

SOLID AUDIO

(Aka 24K & DJiQ!)

FRIDAY 9.11.09

MISS HONEY DUON

(Digital Disco, NYC)

SATURDAY 9.12.09

PAUL HEMMING

(Temple Music Group)

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SAN FRANCISCO

21+ 10PM-4AM

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# FRI/4 ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

CONT>>

**Outrageous Cherry**, Devon Williams, **Thee Makeout Party** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$8.  
**Punchface**, **Triple Cobra**, **Chop** Bottom of the Hill. 9pm, \$10.  
**SMP**, **Stiff Valentine**, **Slave Unit** Annie's Social Club. 9pm, \$10.  
**Alexander Spit**, **Overview**, **Trackademicks**, **J-Billie**, **MC Hopie Spitshard**, **DJ Ant-1 Slim's**. 9pm, \$14.  
**Tinted Windows**, **Magic Christian** Great American Music Hall. 9pm, \$26.  
**White Buffalo** Hotel Utah. 9pm, \$12.  
**Gary Wilson** and the **Blind Dates**, **James Pants**, **Odd Nosdom** Elbo Room. 10pm, \$12.

**BAY AREA**  
**Mos Def**, **Erykah Badu**, **Jay Electronica** Paramount Theatre. 7:30pm, \$39.50-79.50.  
**Wallpaper**, **Battlehooch**, **Somehow at Sea**, **Suicidal Barfly** Uptown. 9pm, free.

## JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Audium 9** 1616 Bush, SF; (415) 771-1616. 8:30pm, \$15.  
**Eric Benet** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 and 10pm, \$35.  
**Black Market Jazz Orchestra** Top of the Mark. 9pm, \$10.  
**Miss Faye Carol** and **Her Trio** Red Poppy Art House. 8pm, \$20.  
**Eric Kurtzrock Trio** Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli Square, 891 Beach, SF; 771-6800. 8pm, free.  
**Strong Move Quartet** Coda. 10pm, \$10.

## FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**Cuban Nights** Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8:30pm, \$15. With Fito Reinoso, and Eddie and Gabriel Navia, and Latin dancing Buena Vista style.  
**Jeremy Serwer** and **Courtney Robbins** Plough and Stars. 9pm, \$6.

## DANCE CLUBS

**Activate!** Lookout, 3600 16th St; (415) 431-0306. 9pm, \$3. Face your demigods and demons at this Red Bull-fueled party.  
**Bar on Church** 9pm. Rotating DJs Zax, Zhaldee, and Nuxx.  
**Matthew Dear**, **Alland Byallo** Mighty. 10pm, \$12. Spinning electronic pop, minimal house, acid techno, and more.  
**Exhale**, **Fridays** Project One Gallery, 251 Rhode Island; (415) 465-2129. 5pm, \$5. Happy hour

with art, fine food, and music with Vin Sol, King Most, DJ Centipede, and Shane King.  
**Fat Stack Fridays** Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary, SF; (415) 885-4788. 10pm, free. With rotating DJs Romanowski, B-Love, Tomas, Toph One, and Vinnie Esparza.  
**Gay Asian Paradise** Club Eight, 1151 Folsom, SF; www.eightsf.com. 9pm, \$8. Featuring two dance floors playing dance and hip hop, smoking patio, and 2 for 1 drinks before 10pm.  
**Laila** Ruby Skye. 9pm, \$20. An international sound experience.  
**Look Out Weekend** Bambuddha Lounge. 4pm, free. Drink specials, food menu and resident DJs White Girl Lust, Swayzee, Philie Ocean, and more.  
**M4M Fridays** Underground SF. 10pm-2am. Joshua J and Frankie Sharp host this man-tastic party.  
**Oldies Night** Knockout. 9pm-2am, \$2-4. Doo-

wop, one-hit wonders, soul, and more with DJs Primo, Daniel, and Lost Cat.  
**Popscene vs. Loaded Presents** Rickshaw Stop. 10pm, \$10. With Twelves, Tenderloins, and more DJs Omar, Aaron, and Sleazemore.  
**Punk Rock and Shlock Karaoke** Annie's Social Club. 9pm-2am, \$5. Eileen and Jody bring you songs from multiple genres to butcher: punk, new wave, alternative, classic rock, and more.  
**Strangelove** Cat Club. 9pm, \$6. Sisters of Mercy tribute with DJs Tomas Diablo, Fact50, Justin, and Prince Charming spinning dark electro, new wave, industrial, and goth.  
**Upper Playground and Sonic Living Happy Hour** Laszlo. 6-9pm, free. Resident DJs Amplive and Tourist with special guests. Drink specials and giveaways.

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 BEER OF THE MONTH...  
**GUINNESS \$3.50 ALL THE TIME!!!**

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 LIVE MUSIC w/  
**How to Make Swords!!**

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**SATURDAY, 5TH**  
**VIDEO Disco**

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**SUN 6TH**  
 Disco w/  
**DJ Schrobi Girl!!**

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**Keg Killers 9-?**

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 Full Bar, Great Grub, Pool, Darts, Big TVs, DJs, Live Bands, Happy Hour (4-7)

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<b>THU SEP 3</b>	<b>KICKBALL PARTY</b> 8pm
<b>FRI SEP 4</b>	<b>THE WEE LANGERS</b> 10pm
<b>SAT SEP 5</b>	<b>THE WRINKLEY BUDDIES</b>
<b>SUN SEP 6</b>	<b>FRONT END LOADER</b> 9pm
<b>MON SEP 7</b>	<b>ULSTER CLUB POST SEASON SESSION</b>
<b>TUE SEP 8</b>	<b>OPEN MIC WITH GRASSHOPPER</b> 8pm sign up

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 THU 9/03 **DJ SNACKFIGHT** 10PM  
 FRI 9/04 **TOIL TEAM** 10PM  
 SAT 9/05 **THE KITCHEN** 10PM  
 SUN 9/06 **DJ BODIE & DJ PUNCHES** 7PM  
**DJ TOBYN** 10PM  
 MON 9/7 **DOWNBEAT MONDAY'S** 10PM  
 TUE 9/8 **ALCOHOLCAUST W/ WHATSHISFUCK. DJ DENIM YETI & SHANE IN BLOOD** 10PM  
 WED 9/9 **DJ LOLA & DJ TOE-KNEE** 10PM

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**ART BY CHRISTINA SHOOK**  
**"CHICKS ON BIKES" RUNS THRU SEPT.**

SAT SEPT. 5TH  
**"THE ABADOX" (SEA.) W/ "WALIN JENOCIDE" (MEMBERS OF WALKEN, FLOATING GOAT) 10PM \$5**

MON. SEPT. 7TH  
**CELEBRATE NOT WORKING ON LABOR DAY W/ ALL DAY HAPPY HOUR & MOJITO MON. (4PM-2AM) & ENJOY ICHI SUSHI (6PM-9PM)**

MON - FRI 4 - 2AM ★ SAT - SUN 2 - 2AM  
 HAPPY HOUR 4 - 7 MON - FRI  
 WHISKEY WED ★ PBR & SHOT \$5  
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 THE CHOP TOPS  
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 SWITCHBLADE RIOT

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD 8PM \$12**

**FREE SHOW!**

**WALLPAPER.**

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**SUICIDAL BARFLY**  
**FIRST FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH, 9PM**

**JUCIFER**  
 The Ferocious Few  
 SASSY

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 9PM**

9/9 DOOR 9PM NO COVER! PIRATE CAT RADIO LOCALS ONLY LIVE SHOWCASE  
**DIG THIS!**  
 KEY2MYND, UROMASTYX, THE OUTLAW GROUP

9/11 DOOR 9PM \$10  
**THE HOOKS**  
 LA PLEBE

9/12 DOOR 9PM \$10  
**THE REVTONES**  
 MIGHTY SLIM PICKENS, BLUE DIAMOND FILLUPS

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 \$15 • 18 & UP  
**SEA WOLF**  
 THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY  
**SARA LOV**

**SAT. & SUN. SEPT. 19 & 20 • \$25 • 21 & UP**  
 SAT.: DOORS 8 / SHOW 9 • SUN.: DOORS 7 / SHOW 8  
**BAJOFONDO**

**FRI. & SAT. SEPT. 25 & 26**  
 DOORS 8 / SHOW 9 • \$23 • 21 & UP  
**TAINTED LOVE**  
 + 9/25: **MUSTACHE HARBOR**  
 + 9/26: **BARELY MANILOW**

COMING 10/29: **THE DODOS**  
 10/30 & 31: **SUPER DIAMOND**  
 11/1: **DIRTY PROJECTORS**

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*Service for the Sick*

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**Free Barbeque Every Sat & Sun**

W **"IT'S MONKEY TIME!"**  
 W/ DJ SERGIO IGLESIAS - 60'S, BUBBLEGUM, & R'n'B

TH **BUILT FOR SPEED**  
**Rocks Your Ass!**

F **PUNK AS FUEK**  
 W/ DJ MASTER BLASTER

SA **I ♥ Wet Panties**  
 DJ Juliet (1984)

SU **DJ ROOST UNO...**  
 UICY SUNDAY

M **Monday Massacre**  
 Dj Shane-In-Blood & Dj RRRinkles & Guests "HEAVY"

T **BLACK TUESDAYS**  
 W/ THE FIEND

M 4-2, TU 2-2, W-F 4-2, S-S 1PM-2  
**HAPPY HOUR TIL 7PM**  
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**HAPPY HOUR**  
**NOON TO 7**  
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**ALL PINTS \$3.00,**  
**24 OZ PBR \$4.00**

• **POOL TABLE**  
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SATURDAY 5

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**B-Cups, Sweet Revenge, Smokejumper, Air Show Disaster** Red Devil Lounge. 8pm, \$10.  
**Detonize, Vivid Sekt, Corpus** Knockout. 4-7pm, \$5.  
**Rick Estrin and the Night Cats** Biscuits and Blues. 8 and 10pm, \$20.  
**Fast Times** Maggie McGarry's, 1353 Grant, SF; (415) 399-9020. 9pm, free.  
**Hightower, Emeralds, Bogus Tokus, Space Vacation** Annie's Social Club. 9pm, \$7.  
**Magic Bullets** Café du Nord. 9pm, \$10.  
**New Radiant Storm King, Faking Your Own Death, Vir** Hemlock Tavern. 9:30pm, \$7.  
**Nico Vega, Dirty Sweet, Gringo Star** Bottom of the Hill. 10pm, \$10.

**Stockholm Syndrome, Bret Mosely** Independent. 9pm, \$25.  
**Tubes, Cat McLean** Great American Music Hall. 9pm, \$25.  
**Wire Train, Translator, Debora Iyall, Benjamin Bossi, DJ Choice** Slim's. 9pm, \$26.

**BAY AREA**  
Jucifer, Ferocious Few Uptown. 9pm, free.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Audium 9** 1616 Bush, SF; (415) 771-1616. 8:30pm, \$15.  
**Eric Kurtzrock Trio** Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli Square, 891 Beach, SF; (415) 771-6800. 8pm, free.  
**Four Freshmen** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, \$24.  
**Ricardo Scales** Top of the Mark. 9pm, \$10.  
**Steppin'** featuring **Oscar Myers** Coda. 10pm, \$10.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**Thorny Brocky** Red Poppy Art House. 8pm, \$15.  
**Carnaval Del Sur** Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8pm, \$15.  
**Kit and the Branded Men with Emith** Plough and Stars. 9pm, \$6.

DANCE CLUBS

**Debaser** Knockout. 11pm, \$5. Wear your flannel and get in free before 11pm to this party, where DJ Jamie Jams and Emdee play alternative hits from the 1990s.  
**Everlasting Bass** 330 Ritch. 10pm, \$5-10. Bay Area Sistah Sound presents this party, with DJs Zita and Pam the Funkstress spinning hip-hop, soul, funk, reggae, dancehall, and club classics.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 32 >>



**BOTTOM OF THE HILL**  
info line: (415) 621-4455

WED  
SEP 2  
DOOR 8:30  
\$8  
age: 21+

**BIG BLUE WHALE**  
**HURRY UP SHOTGUN**  
**THE DASHING SUNS**

THU  
SEP 3  
DOOR 8:30  
\$8  
age: ALL

**SCENE OF ACTION**  
(CD release)  
**FIGHTING THE VILLAIN**  
(CD release)  
**ROBOTS OF FURY**

FRI  
SEP 4  
DOOR 8:30  
\$10  
age: ALL

**TRIPLE COBRA**  
**NYLON HEART ATTACK**  
**THE CHOP**

SAT  
SEP 5  
DOOR 8:30  
\$10  
age: 21+

**NICO VEGA**  
(co-headlining)  
**DIRTY SWEET**  
(co-headlining)  
**GRINGO STAR**

WED  
9/9

**SING FOR CHINA TOUR**  
Hedgehog • Queen Sea Big Shark  
Casino Demon • Drunken Hu?

THU  
9/10

**HEALTH**  
Mi Ami • Pictureplane

FRI  
9/11

**MY REVOLVER**  
Zodiac Death Valley • The Dead Westerns

SAT  
9/12

**ELLIOT RANDALL**  
Gina Villalobos • James dePrato

SUN  
9/13

**THE HONORARY TITLE**  
Good Old War • Cory Branan

TUE  
9/15

**JOEY CAPE**  
Lagwagon  
Jon Snodgrass • Chad Rex  
Drag The River

[www.bottomofthehill.com](http://www.bottomofthehill.com)  
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**KITCHEN OPEN DAILY**

★ Wed 9/2  
8PM/\$10

KUSF PRESENTS  
**DAVILA 666**  
**MANNEQUIN MEN**  
**NOBUNNY**  
**BRIDEZ**

★ Thu 9/3  
9PM/\$5  
ALL AGES

**THIS IS MY FIST**  
**AIRFIX KITS**  
**ROBOCOP 3**  
**GUNNER**

★ Fri 9/4  
9PM/\$10  
ALL AGES

WHORE FOR SATAN PRESENTS  
**HATCHET**  
**HAVOK**  
**BROCUS HELM**  
**LACERATION**  
**DJ ROB METAL**

★ Sat 9/5  
3PM  
FREE  
ALL AGES

HAPPY HOUR SHOW  
**DAMMIT**  
**IDOMENEO**  
**HEMORRHAGE**

9PM  
FREE

**BAY AREA DISC**  
**ASSOCIATION PARTY**

★ Sun 9/6  
4PM/FREE  
ALL AGES

TWANG SUNDAY  
**BACK 40**  
**& FRIENDS**

UPCOMING SHOWS:

9/9 - HANK N. GRABASS CHARLESTONS, CHEAP GIRLS  
9/11 - DUANE PETERS GUNFIGHT, BADSTRIP, SASQUATCH, HOUSE OF BROKEN PROMISES  
9/12 - STAB CITY, PRIMITIVAS  
9/17 - TURBONEGRA, SWITCHBLADE RIOT, MY PARADE  
9/20 - THE SUBURBAN HOME RECORDS TOUR, AUSTIN LUCAS, TWO COW GARAGE, MIKE HALE  
9/24 - CORMORANT, VELNIAS, FELL VOICES, ELM  
9/25 - DEAD TO ME, NOTHINGTON  
10/1 - WE SHOULD BE DEAD, MALDROID, THE HOOKS  
10/2 - DESTROYER 666, THE ACCUSED, WITCHAVEN, VIETUS MORTUUS

ADV TIX THROUGH [WWW.THEEPARKSIDE.COM](http://WWW.THEEPARKSIDE.COM)  
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[WWW.HEMLOCKTAVERN.COM](http://WWW.HEMLOCKTAVERN.COM)

WED  
9/2

**MIKE DONOVAN (SIC ALPS)** 9PM \$6  
**AEROBICS KING**  
**BANAYA PAPAYA**

THU  
9/3

**JAPAN THER** EARLY SHOW 6PM \$7  
**NINJASONIK**

**JONESIN'** LATE SHOW 9:30PM \$6  
**SANDWITCHES**  
**HANNI EL KHATIB**

FRI  
9/4

**OUTRAGEOUS CHERRY** 9:30PM \$8  
**DEVON WILLIAMS**  
**THEE MAKEOUT PARTY**

SAT  
9/5

**NEW RADIANT STORM KING**  
**FAKING YOUR OWN DEATH**  
(MEMBS. OF ELEPHONE)  
**VIR** 9:30PM \$7

SUN  
9/6

**MIDNIGHT STRANGERS** 9PM \$6  
**TOUGH LUXURY**  
**THE CONS**

MON  
9/7

**PUNK ROCK SIDESHOW** 10PM FREE  
**W/DJ TRAGIC & DUCHESS OF HAZARD**

TUE  
9/8

**KARL BLAU** 9PM \$6  
**NEAL MORGAN**  
**CASUAL FOG**

WED  
9/9

CLUB CHUCKLES PRESENTS 2 SHOWS: 8PM & 10PM, \$12  
**REGGIE WATTS** ADVANCE TIX NOW ON SALE  
**WITH RORY SCOVEL**  
**AND CHRIS THAYER**

THU  
9/10

**WINTER'S FALL** 9PM \$7  
**TELEGRAPH CANYON (DALLAS)**  
**MANZANITA**

FRI  
9/11

**BARE WIRES** 9:30PM \$6  
**BLOOD DRAINED COWS**  
(EX-ANGRY SAMOANS, ROKY & THE ALIENS)  
**VOWS**

SAT  
9/12

**GLITTER WIZARD** 9:30PM \$6  
**THE GROGGS**  
**DIRTY CUPCAKES**

SUN  
9/13

**UNIT BREED** 9PM \$5

TUE  
9/15

**NO BABIES** 9PM \$6  
**2 UP (JAPAN)**  
**AFTERNOON BROTHER**

# FRIDAY NIGHTS

at the de Young

## September 4

From 5–8:45pm with free programs and live music.  
Enjoy cocktails and an evening menu in the Cafe.  
Regular museum admission prices apply.

Image: John Santos, photo by Frank Espada.

VIEW the special exhibition *Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs*. This exhibition presents 130 important objects, including 50 from the tomb of King Tut, and places the boy king in a larger context through an additional 80 objects from the tombs of his ancestors. Also on view, *Art and Power in the Central African Savanna*.

DINE on a special Friday Night Café menu featuring a choice of any **three small plates for \$13** including dishes such as Dungenous Crab Cake, Fulton Chicken Tangine or Spicy Hummus.

EXPERIENCE the **John Santos Sextet** with arrangements of music from Cuba, Puerto Rico and the United States.

LEARN from Jonathan Elias as he discusses “**Mummies Victorious! How the Dead of Egypt Conquered the World.**” This lecture explores the Western fascination with Egyptian mummies from the Renaissance to the rise of modern forensic science. In the Koret Auditorium, 7–8pm; seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.

CREATE your own **mummy** by wrapping newspaper with cloth strips and fish with a “funeral” mask.

Friday Nights at the de Young is supported by the Koret Foundation. Friday Nights at the de Young is part of FAMSf's Cultural Encounters initiative generously funded by The James Irvine Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Columbia Foundation, and the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation.

the James Irvine foundation

Golden Gate Park  
50 Tea Garden Drive  
[deyoungmuseum.org](http://deyoungmuseum.org)  
415.750.3600

# de Young

SFBG.COM/MUSIC 31



SAT/5  
DANCE CLUBS  
CONT>>

**Fire Corner** Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary; 885-4788. 9:30pm, free. Rare and outrageous ska, rocksteady, and reggae vinyl with Revival Sound System and guests.  
**Gemini Disco** Underground SF. 10pm, \$5. Disco with DJ Derrick Love.  
**HYP** Club Eight, 1151 Folsom, SF; www.eightsf.com. 10pm, free. Gay and lesbian hip hop party, featuring DJs spinning the newest in the top 40s hip hop and hyphy.  
**Leisure** Paradise Lounge. 10pm, \$7. DJs Omar, Aaron, and Jet Set James spinning classic brit-pop, mod, 60s soul, and 90s indie.  
**Moped** Amnesia. 10pm.  
**Rebel Girl** Rickshaw Stop. 10pm, \$5-7. A sex-

ylicious dance party of girrrs, bois, and their friends with DJ China G.  
**Saturday Night Soul Party** Elbo Room. 10pm, \$10. Sixties soul on 45s with DJs Lucky, Phengren Oswald, and Paul Paul.  
**So Special** Club Six. 9pm, \$5. DJ Dans One and guests spinning dancehall, reggae, classics, and remixes.  
**Spirit Fingers Sessions** 330 Ritch. 9pm, free. With DJ Morse Code and live guest performances.  
**Summer Saturdays** Bar On Church. 9pm, free. With DJ Mark Andrus spinning top 40, mash-ups, hip hop, and electro.

SUNDAY 6

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**Guitar Shorty** Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$20.

**In n' Out** Boom Boom Room. 9:30pm, \$5.  
**Davy Knowles and Back Door Slam**, **Rob Drabkin** Slim's. 8pm, \$16.  
**Adam Marsland, Adrian Bourgeois** Union Room (at Biscuits and Blues). 8pm, \$10.  
**Midnight Stranglers, Tough Luxury, Cons** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$6.  
**Old Grandad, Floating Goat, Pins of Light, Aerial** Ruin Annie's Social Club. 7pm, \$8.  
**Maia Sharp** Café du Nord. 8pm, \$15.  
**Stockholm Syndrome, Stone Foxes** Independent. 9pm, \$25.  
**Wavvs, Ganglians** Rickshaw Stop. 7:30pm, \$12.

BAY AREA

**John Legend, India.Arie, Vaughn Anthony** Greek Theater, UC Berkeley, Berk; www.ticketmaster.com. 7:30pm, \$39.50-89.50.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Four Freshmen** Yoshi's San Francisco. 2 and 7pm, \$5-24.  
**Lucid Lovers** Harris' Restaurant, 2100 Van Ness, SF; (415) 673-1888. 6:30pm.  
**Rob Modica** Simple Pleasures, 3434 Balboa, SF; (415) 387-4022. 3pm, free.

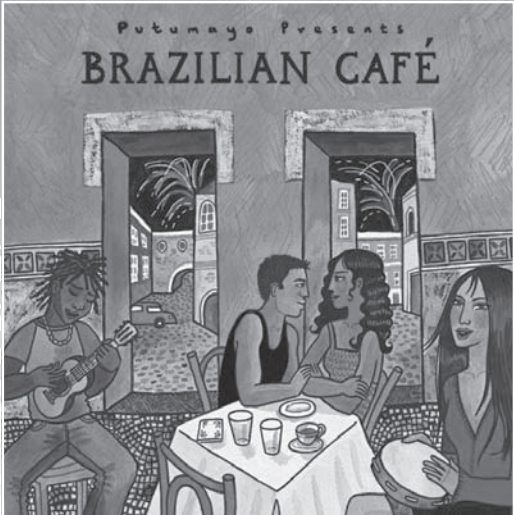
FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**George Lammam Ensemble** Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 9pm; \$10.  
**Mucho Axe** Coda. 8pm, \$7.  
**Quin and friends** Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.  
**"Songwriter Sundays"** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, \$3. With Francesca Lee, Jennifer Faust, and Weather Pending.  
**Tippy Canoe** Velo Rouge, 798 Arguello, SF; (415) 752-7799. 2pm, free.

DANCE CLUBS

**DiscoFunk Mashups** Cat Club. 10pm, free. House and 70's music.  
**Dub Mission 13th Anniversary** Elbo Room. 9pm, \$6. Dub, roots, and classic dancehall with DJs Sep, Yossi Fine, and Twilight Circus Dub Sound System with Ryan Moore.  
**45Club's Soulful Labor Day Funk Fest** Knockout. 9pm, \$2. With Dirty Dishes, English Steve, and dX the Funky Granpaw.  
**Gloss Sundays** Trigger, 2344 Market, SF; (415) 551-CLUB. 7pm. With DJ Hawthorne spinning house, funk, soul, retro, and disco.  
**Honey Soundsystem** Paradise Lounge. 8pm-2am. "Dance floor for dancers – sound system for lovers." Got that?  
**Jock!** Lookout, 3600 16th; 431-0306. 3pm, \$2. This high-energy party raises money for LGBT sports teams.

Look what Putumayo is serving up at Best Buy...



**Brazilian Café** - Sensuous samba, bossa nova, and jazz from Rio De Janeiro and beyond

Also on the menu...



**Café Cubano** - Guajiras, trovas, boleros from the island.

**Italian Café** - Classic & contemporary Italian songs

**French Café** - Legends of French chanson & new voices, too.



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Top 100 Bay Area Restaurants 2009 and Top 10 New Restaurants of 2008  
—San Francisco Chronicle

<p>Wed, September 2 (10pm, Late Show) <i>tonight!</i> <b>Jazz Mafia presents</b> <b>SHOTGUN WEDDING SYMPHONY</b></p> <p><i>this week!</i> Thurs, Fri, September 3, 4 <b>ERIC BENET</b></p> <p><i>this weekend!</i> Sat, Sun, September 5, 6 <b>THE FOUR FRESHMEN</b></p> <p><i>this weekend!</i> Sat, September 5 (10:30pm, Late Show JUST ADDED!) <b>TANYA STEPHENS</b></p> <p><i>next week!</i> Mon, September 7 <b>THE BELLEVILLE OUTFIT</b></p> <p><i>next week!</i> Tues, September 8 (8pm, Early Show) <b>RALPH CARNEY'S SERIOUS JASS PROJECT</b></p> <p><i>next week!</i> Tues, September 8 (10pm, Late Show) <b>ERIC McFADDEN UNION</b></p> <p>Thurs, September 10 Open Dance Floor <b>SILA &amp; THE AFROFUNK EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p>Fri, Sat, Sun, September 11, 12, 13 <b>THE BAD PLUS</b></p> <p>Sat, September 12 (11:59pm, Late Show) Beyond Jazz Music Series: Midnight Edition <b>THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE</b> featuring Nicolay &amp; Phonte (of Little Brother)</p> <p>Mon, September 14 <b>BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO</b></p> <p>Tues, September 15 <b>HYIM</b> <i>Sex In The Morning</i> - CD Release</p> <p>Wed, September 16 <b>DR. LONNIE SMITH TRIO</b> with Peter Bernstein and Bill Stewart with DJ Harry D</p> <p>Thurs, September 17 (8pm, Early Show) <b>SAKAI</b></p> <p><i>Late Night Live!</i> Every Tuesday 9:30pm - late, \$3 Cover</p>	<p>Wed, September 2 <i>tonight!</i> <b>DAVE DOUGLAS &amp; BRASS ECSTASY</b></p> <p>Thurs, Fri, September 3, 4 <i>this week!</i> (8pm, Early Show) <b>THE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA</b></p> <p>Thurs, September 3 (10pm, Late Show) <b>CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE</b> <i>this week!</i></p> <p>Fri, September 4 (10pm, Late Show) <i>this weekend!</i> <b>MARCIA BALL</b></p> <p>Sat, Sun, Mon, September 5, 6, 7 <i>this weekend!</i> <b>ERIC BENET</b></p> <p>Tues, September 8 <i>next week!</i> <b>ROBIN DUHE</b></p> <p>Wed, Thurs, September 9, 10 <b>BRIAN BROMBERG'S IT IS WHAT IT IS TOUR</b> featuring Patrice Rushen, Will Kennedy Gary Meek</p> <p>Fri, Sat, Sun, September 11, 12, 13 Celebrating 30 Years! <b>HIROSHIMA</b></p> <p>Mon, September 14 <b>JOHN CALLOWAY &amp; THE FLUTE ODYSSEY</b></p> <p>Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri September 15, 16, 17, 18 <b>CHICK COREA</b> <b>STANLEY CLARKE &amp; LENNY WHITE</b></p> <p>Sat, Sun, September 19, 20 <b>LIZZ WRIGHT</b></p> <p>Mon, September 21 <b>ERIC MUHLER QUARTET</b> <i>The Jury is Out</i> - CD Release</p> <p>Tues, Wed, September 22, 23 <b>SOULIVE</b> with The Shady Horns, Nigel Hall and special guest FRED WESLEY Also appearing at Yoshi's SF September 24-25</p> <p>Thurs, September 24 <b>JOHN NEMETH</b></p>
--	---

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MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7 8PM, FREE JAZZ!  
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**Kick It Bar** on Church. 9pm. Hip-hop with DJ Zax.  
**Religion Bar** on Church. 3pm. With DJ Nikita.  
**Stag AsiaSF**. 6pm, \$5. Gay bachelor parties are the target demo of this weekly erotic tea dance.  
**SupaStar Sunday** Blue Macaw, 2565 Mission, SF; [www.myspace.com/citypage](http://www.myspace.com/citypage). 10:30pm. Hosted by SupaStar City with DJ Rick Lee.

## MONDAY 7

### ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**Cold Cave, Crocodiles, Best Coast** Knockout. 10pm, \$5.  
**Little Cow** Café du Nord. 8pm, \$10.

### JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Belleville Outfit** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, \$10.  
**Lavay Smith Trio** Enrico's, 504 Broadway, SF; [www.enricossf.com](http://www.enricossf.com). 7pm, free.

### FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**Israel Vibration, Giant Panda Guerilla Dub Squad** Independent. 9pm, \$25.  
**Songs of Sea Labor** Ferryboat Eureka, Hyde Street Pier, SF; (415) 447-5000. Noon, \$5. With Salty Walt and the Rattlin' Ratlines and Holdstock and Macleod.

### DANCE CLUBS

**Black Gold** Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary; 885-4788. 10pm-2am, free. Senator Soul spins Detroit soul, Motown, New Orleans R&B, and more — all on 45!  
**Going Steady** Dalva. 10pm, free. DJs Amy and Troy spinning 60's girl groups, soul, garage, and more.  
**King of Beats** Tunnel Top. 10pm. DJs J-Roca and Kool Karlo spinning reggae, electro, boogie, funk, 90's hip hop, and more.  
**Krazy for Karaoke Happy Hour** Knockout. 5-9pm, free. Belt it out with host Deadbeat.  
**Mainroom Mondays** Annie's Social Club. 9pm, free. Live the dream: karaoke on Annie's stage and pretend you're Jello Biafra.

**Manic Mondays** Bar on Church. 9pm. Drink 80-cent cosmos with DJs Mark Andrus and Dangerous Dan.  
**Monster Show** Underground SF. 10pm, \$5. Cookie Dough and DJ MC2 make Mondays worth dancing about, with a killer drag show at 11pm.  
**Network Mondays** Azul Lounge, One Tillman Pl; [www.inhousetalent.com](http://www.inhousetalent.com). 9pm, \$5. Hip-hop, R&B, and spoken word open mic, plus featured performers.  
**Spliff Sessions** Tunnel Top. 10pm, free. DJs MAKossa, Kung Fu Chris, and C. Moore spin funk, soul, reggae, hip-hop, and psychedelia on vinyl.

## TUESDAY 8

### ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

**Black Cobra, 16, Serpent Crown, DJ Rob Metal** Knockout. 10pm, free.  
**Karl Blau, Neal Morgan, Casual Fog** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$6.  
**Michael Burks** Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$20.  
**David Cook** Fillmore. 8pm, \$32.50.  
**Laura Cortese and Jefferson Hamer, Anne Heaton** Elbo Room. 9pm, \$7.  
**JL Stiles, Sean Garvey, Quinn Deveau** Café du Nord. 9:30pm, \$10.

### JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

**Dave Parker Quintet** Rasselas Jazz. 8pm.  
**Spencer Day** Rrazz Room, Hotel Nikko, 222 Mason, SF; [www.therrazzroom.com](http://www.therrazzroom.com). 8pm, \$30-37.50.  
**Eric McFadden Union** Yoshi's San Francisco. 10pm, \$14.  
**"Jazz Mafia Tuesdays"** Coda. 9pm, \$7. With Spaceheater's Blast Furnace.  
**Ralph Carney's Serious Jass Project** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, \$14.  
**Ricardo Scales** Top of the Mark. 6:30pm, \$5.

### FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

**Kitten on the Keys** Climate Theater, 285 Ninth

St, SF; (415) 704-3260. 8pm, \$7-15.  
**Barry O'Connell, Vinnie Cronin and friends** Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.

### DANCE CLUBS

**Drunken Monkey** Annie's Social Club. 9pm, free. Weekly guest DJs and Hamm's for a buck.  
**Eclectic Company** Skylark, 9pm, free. DJs Tones and Jaybee spin old school hip hop, bass, dub, glitch, and electro.  
**Mixology** Aunt Charlie's Lounge, 133 Turk, (415) 441-2922. 10pm, \$2. DJ Frantik mixes with the science and art of music all night.  
**Rock Out Karaoke!** Amnesia. 7:30pm. With Glenny Kravitz.  
**Share the Love** Trigger, 2344 Market, SF; (415) 551-CLUB. 5pm, free. With DJ Pam Hubbuck spinning house.  
**Womanizer** Bar on Church. 9pm. With DJ Nuxx. **SFBG**

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 5-10pm FREE before 6pm | \$5 cover

**THURSDAY SEPT. the 3RD**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD SF**  
**OPENING**

111 Minna Gallery is proud to host  
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 some of San Francisco's most exciting  
 and prolific artists.  
 6pm-late

**FRIDAY SEPT. the 4TH**  
**HAPPY HOUR**  
 DJ Bartenders Favorites Big Dave,  
 Bryan, and Gabe  
 5pm-9pm

**BOOK ARTS**  
**ZINES**  
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## stage

Family ties become irrevocably tangled in Octavio Solis' *El Otro*, with young Romy (Maria Candelaria, far left) caught between father figures Lupe (Sean San José, far left) and Ben (Johnny Moreno, with blanket, next to Richard Talavera, in hat). At right, Ben and Lupe square off as tensions rise. | PHOTO BY ALLAN S. MANOLO



## Border bender

Thick Description's revival of Octavio Solis's *El Otro* is a trip

By Robert Avila  
a&eletters@sfbg.com

Heading south across the Rio Grande, their pants and shoes raised high over their heads, a 13-year-old Mexican American girl named Romy (Maria Candelaria) and her two sort-of fathers — inveterate bad boy Lupe (Sean San José) and straight-laced new stepdad Ben (Johnny Moreno) — waded into the past as their only way forward. In what you could call a return to the repressed, they find themselves in an in-between world of haunted memories and intersecting fates, devilish plans and sweet, unexpected salvation.

This is Octavio Solis territory par excellence, the playwright who for the last three decades has mapped landscapes personal, psychical, and political at once: this is *Dreamlandia*, or the coma realm where *Lydia* communes with her counterpart Ceci across space and multiple other barriers. Here, in lyrical, fiercely funny and sublimely violent *El Otro* — revived, and revised by Solis, as part of Thick Description's 20th anniversary season — Texas and Mexico dissolve in peyote-fueled depths of meaning and contradiction along a border never as solid or sure

as anyone thinks. Even the tattoo off her dad Lupe's back (Rhonnie Washington) — a black man in a black cowboy suit riding to the rescue with irrelevant Berlitz Spanish — is anything but two-dimensional.

But back to the setting: it's the 1980s, it's a Monday, it's Reagan's "Morning in America," which is to say it feels like the start and the end of something big. Romy, having lived with Lupe since her mother Nina (a sharp Presciliana Esparolini) left him for good, is getting the hand-off. Nina's new love, Ben, pressed and manly in his private's uniform, has come to pick her up and take her back to her mother. But Lupe isn't willing to let her go that easy, insisting Ben accompany him to retrieve a present he bought her. Lupe's behavior — erratic, coy, in no way to be trusted — worries the private everyone insists on calling "Sarge." But he sees no alternative and does his best to be mature, responsible, and agreeable as both Lupe and Romy gradually reduce him to a shattered mess. What emerges afterward is a secret family history just hinted at before, and a strange, almost surreal plot of atonement-revenge devised by Lupe in cahoots with a rancher (Richard

Talavera) and his wife (Wilma Bonet).

In what Thick Description announced will be its last production in its Potrero District black box theater, artistic director Tony Kelly stages the play in stark, bare-bones fashion, the play's moods and settings conveyed largely by the actors, along with choice lighting cues from Rick Martin and flashes of musical coloring courtesy of Vincent Montoya, with Seventy and the Tattooed Love Dogs.

The spare stage gives rein to a fluid pace in sync with the play's consciousness-slipping style, but Kelly's normally very sharp eye seemed less trained than usual at times. The music cues could feel cramped and sometimes engulfed a line or two, and opening night's performances were in some places still gelling. San Jose prowled and shook the stage with a ferocious, concentrated energy and a crisp sardonic wit, but that intensity was matched only part of the time by Moreno's proudly square and increasingly overwhelmed stepdad, or by Candelaria's Romy, who felt initially a bit rote and could be difficult to hear. Both actors came much more to the fore in the second act, however. And as a first act closer, it's hard to beat Rhonnie Washington's entrance as El Charro Negro, one of Solis' more fanciful and inspired creations and a consistent treat throughout in Washington's hands (who is back in the saddle after hav-

ing originated the role in 1996).

Well-pitched performances came too from Lawrence Radecker as Ross, an increasingly light-headed and blood-bespattered cowboy, and Michael Bellino as the border patrol cop wrestling with his backlogged conscience after he catches Mexicans sneaking the wrong way over the river — a real fuse-blower, the sight acts on him like a nonsense rhyme on one of those *Star Trek* robots with the smoldering ears.

Solis, enjoying an impressive string of productions of late, including last season's excellent Bay Area premiere of *Lydia* at Marin Theatre Company, crafted an enduring work in *El Otro* for all its pop references and rough edges. At the best moments in this admittedly fitful but worthwhile production, the flow of language — mingling flights of poetic revelry, whimsical and colorful vulgarity and deadpan humor — seems to hover and soar just over the stage. At the same time, it never loses sight of the ground, and in fact more than once plunges deep into the mud: playing movingly with life and death in the viscous slime and churning waters of that border-defining river. **SFBG**

## EL OTRO

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PHOTO BY RUMUNA

## RAWdance presents the Concept Series: 5

► **PREVIEW** RAWdance's Concept Series is the brainchild of dancer-choreographers Ryan T. Smith and Wendy Rein, who needed a lab situation in which to test concept and show works in progress. They invited friends and artists who looked interesting and who had similar concerns. The result is a series of informal presentations that sparkle with fresh ideas, although the individual works are rarely finished. Watching this type of dance is so inviting, despite the tiny, near-impossible performance space. It's long and narrow, and audiences must be prepared to move the furniture to accommodate a particular artist's requirements. Concept 5 looks especially intriguing. In addition to Smith and Rein's latest experiments, you'll get the inimitable Mary Armentrout; Bob Webb/Bare Bones Butoh — you probably know him better as the ubiquitous stage manager who keeps dance shows on track; improv dancers Christine Cali and Amy Stemstetter, freshly back from the East Coast; Printz Dance Project, who have their own show Nov. 5-7; and Lily Dwyer and Scott Marlowe, LEVY Dance members who are striking out on their own. Parking is tough, so patronize Muni. But the price is right: pay what you can — and the popcorn is free. **(Rita Felciano)**

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Stage listings are compiled by Molly Freedenberg. Performance times may change; call venues to confirm. Reviewers are Robert Avila, Rita Felciano, and Nicole Gluckstern. Submit items for the listings at [lists@sfbg.com](mailto:lists@sfbg.com). For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks. For the complete listings, go to [www.sfbg.com](http://www.sfbg.com).

## THEATER

### OPENING

**Under the Gypsy Moon** Teatro ZinZanni, Pier 29; 438-2668, [www.zinzanni.org](http://www.zinzanni.org). \$117-\$145. Opens Sept 3. Runs Wed-Sat, 6pm; Sun, 5pm. Through Jan 1. Teatro ZinZanni presents a bewitching evening of European cabaret, cirque, theatrical spectacle, and original live music, blended with a five-course gourmet dinner.

### BAY AREA

**American Idiot** Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Roda Theatre, 2025 Addison, Berk; (510) 647-2917, [www.berkeleyrep.org](http://www.berkeleyrep.org). \$32-\$54. Previews Sept 4, 5, 9, 10, and 13. Runs through Oct 11. Michael Mayer directs this new show uniting the searing songs of Green Day with the director of *Spring Awakening*.

### ONGOING

**"AfroSolo Arts Festival"** Various venues; 771-2376, [afrosolo.org](http://afrosolo.org). Prices vary. Various dates through Oct 15. AfroSolo Theatre Company presents the 16th annual festival celebrating artists giving voice to the black experience, featuring music, visual arts, and more.

**August: Osage County** Curran Theatre, 445 Geary; 512-7770, [shnsf.com](http://shnsf.com). \$35-80. Thurs/3, 7:30pm; Wed/2, 2 and 7:30pm; Fri/4, 8pm; Sat/5, 2 and 8pm; Sun/6, 2 pm. The Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway show about a rural Oklahoma family stars Estelle Parsons.

**The Comedy of Errors** Presidio Main Post Parade Ground Lawn, Graham between Lincoln and Moraga; 558-0888, [www.sfhshakes.org](http://www.sfhshakes.org). Free. Sat, 7:30pm; Sun, 2:30pm. Sept 7, 2:30pm. Through Sept 20. The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival presents the classic directed by Kenneth Kelleher. **Crash Cabaret: Where Queers Collide** Mama Calizo's Voice Factory, 701 Mission; 978-2787, [www.ybca.org](http://www.ybca.org). \$10. Fridays, through Oct 25. As part of the PUSH PLAY→YBCA Summer Festival, Mama Calizo's hosts a series of interactive, activist, and social justice events.

**A Crass Act** New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness; 861-8972, [www.nctcsf.org](http://www.nctcsf.org). \$20-\$25. Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through Sept 12. NCTC's Summer Cabaret Series presents Tom Orr in an all-new musical comedy.

► **East 14th Marsh**, 1062 Valencia; 1-800-838-3006, [www.themarsh.org](http://www.themarsh.org). \$20-35. Fri, 8pm; Sat, 8:30pm; Sun, 3pm. Through Oct. 10. Don Reed's solo play, making its local premiere at the Marsh after an acclaimed New York run, is truly a welcome homecoming twice over. It returns the Bay Area native to the place of his vibrant, physically dynamic, consistently hilarious coming-of-age story, set in 1970s Oakland between two poles of East 14th Street's African American neighborhood: one defined by his mother's strict ass-whooping home, dominated by his uptight Jehovah's Witness stepfather; the other by his biological father's madcap but utterly non-judgmental party house. The latter—shared by two stepbrothers, one a player and the other flam-

boyantly gay, under a pimped-out, bighearted patriarch whose only rule is "be yourself" — becomes the teenage Reed's refuge from a boyhood bereft of Christmas and filled with weekend door-to-door proselytizing. Still, much about the facts of life in the ghetto initially eludes the hormonal and naïve young Reed, including his own flamboyant, ever-flush father's occupation: "I just thought he was really into hats." But dad—along with each of the characters Reed deftly incarnates in this very engaging, loving but never hokey tribute—has something to teach the talented kid whose excellence in speech and writing at school marked him out, correctly, as a future "somebody." (Avila)

**Good Boys and True** New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness, SF. 861-4914, [www.nctcsf.org](http://www.nctcsf.org). Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Through Sept 20. NCTC presents the West Coast premiere of Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's drama.

**The Grapes of Wrath** Actors Theatre of SF, 855 Bush; 345-1287, [www.actorstheatresf.org](http://www.actorstheatresf.org). \$10-\$35. Wed-Sat, 8pm. Through Sept 26. Actors Theatre of San Francisco Presents Frank Galati's adaptation of John Steinbeck's novel.

**KML Patronizes the Arts** Traveling Jewish Theatre, 470 Florida; 558-7721, [killingmylobster.com](http://killingmylobster.com). \$15-\$20. Thurs-Fri, 8pm; Sat, 7 and 10pm; Sun, 7pm. Through Sept 13. Killing My Lobster returns with an original sketch comedy production directed by Erin Carter.

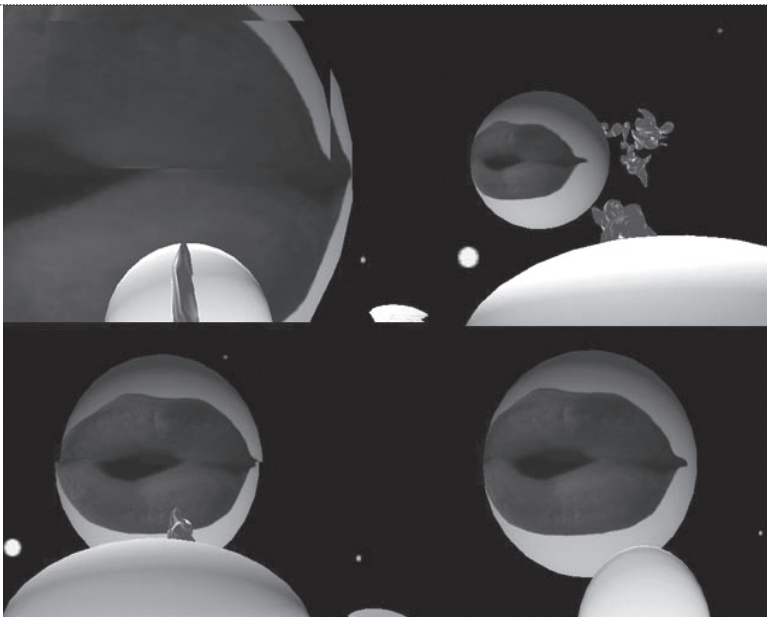
► **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest** SF Playhouse, 533 Sutter. \$30-\$40. Wed/3-Sat/5, 8pm; Sat/5, 3pm. Dale Wasserman's stage adaptation of Ken Kesey's anti-authoritarian novel is a solid theatrical work in its own right, and holds up remarkably well in this production from SF Playhouse. Perhaps surprising given that the play's political reference points are all half a century old, but then again its scathing attack on the totalitarian agenda beneath an insidious therapeutic culture couldn't really be much timelier. Moreover, and without making a big deal about it, artistic director Bill English's production subverts some of the more politically staid aspects of Kesey's otherwise radically anti-establishment story (published in 1962) by casting the excellent Los Angeles-based African American actor Hansford Prince in the traditionally white-guy role of natural born anarchist and charmer R.P. McMurphy. Backing him up is a very solid and enjoyable ensemble too, including Michael Torres in a highly sympathetic turn as the Chief; Susi Damilano as a nicely understated, terribly human Nurse Ratched; and Louis Parnell as Harding, one of the several "voluntary" in-patients (and here a much more significant role, ultimately, than what materialized in the famous film adaptation). (Avila)

**El Otro** Thick House, 1695 18th St; 401-8081, [www.thickhouse.org](http://www.thickhouse.org). \$15-\$30. Thurs-Sun, 8pm. Through Sept 13. Thick Description revives their 1998 hit.

**Pearls Over Shanghai** Hypnodrome, 575 Tenth St.; 1-800-838-3006, [www.thrillpeddlers.com](http://www.thrillpeddlers.com). \$30-69. Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 7pm. Through Sept 20. Thrillpeddlers presents this revival of the legendary Cockettes' 1970 musical extravaganza.

**Shanghai San Francisco** One Telegraph Hill; 1-877-384-7843, [www.shanghaisanfrancisco.com](http://www.shanghaisanfrancisco.com). \$40. Sat, 1pm. Ongoing. To be Shanghaied: "to be kidnapped for compulsory service aboard a ship...to be induced or compelled to do something, especially by fraud or force". Once the scene of many an "involuntary" job interview, San Francisco's Barbary Coast is now the staging ground for *Shanghai San Francisco*, a performance piece slash improv slash scavenger hunt through the still-beating hearts of North Beach and Chinatown, to the edge of the Tenderloin. Beginning at the base of Coit Tower, participants meet the first of several characters who set up the audience and dispense clues, before sending the audience off on a self-paced jaunt through the aforementioned neighborhoods, induced and compelled (though not by force) to search for a kidnapped member of the revived San Francisco Committee of Vigilance. It's a fine notion and a fun stroll on a sunny afternoon, but ultimately succeeds far better as a walking tour than as theatre. Because the actors are spread rather thinly on the ground, they're unable to take better advantage of their superior vantage by stalking groups a little more closely, staging distractions along the way, and generally engaging the audience as such a little more frequently. But since *Shanghai San Francisco* is a constantly evolving project, maybe next time they'll do just that. (Gluckstern)

**The Zombie Musical** Stagewerx, 533 Sutter; [zombiemusicals.com](http://zombiemusicals.com). \$15. Opens Aug 27. Runs Thurs/3-Sat/5, 8pm. Anthony R. Miller directs this rock/horror/tragicomedy that will eat your face off. **SFBG**



## art.tech

► **PREVIEW** As I write this, I'm eating one of those new giant Cheetos — you know, the latest delectable Alice Waters heart attack, sheer processed junk food Armageddon, elephantiasis of the puffed balls? Yum. My point here is that there's no form of art that hasn't been deeply and irrevocably touched by technology, and also that I'm a little stoned. Pitched somewhere between Maker Faire and head trip, the three-day art.tech festival at the Lab explores the intersection of artistic exploration, experimental fabrication, and digital prestidigitiation and includes performance, workshops, presentations, and interactive flights of fancy. Among the highlights: a Virtual Knitting demo that entwines physical and virtual space; a "relational presentation" of Anti-Pandora, a hand-made backpack that generates usable energy from walking or running, and Seek 'n Spell, an interactive iPhone game that's a cross between Scrabble and a scavenger hunt. Dang, my fingers just painted my keyboard neon orange. **(Marke B.)**

**ART.TECH** Fri/4-Sun/6, various times, \$12-\$20 daily, \$36 for three-day pass.

The Lab, 2948 16th St., 415-864-8855, [www.thelab.org](http://www.thelab.org)

Events listings are compiled by Paula Connelly. Submit items for the listings at [lists@sfbg.com](mailto:lists@sfbg.com). For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

## WEDNESDAY 2

**Rebecca Solnit** Green Arcade, 1680 Market, SF; (415) 431-6800. 7pm, free. A release party for Solnit's new book, *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities that Arise in Disaster*, where the award winning author explores themes of altruism and hope through several histories of the shaken commons in the aftermath of calamity.

## THURSDAY 3

**Divisadero Art Walk** Divisadero from Haight to Geary, SF; [www.divisaderoartwalk.blogspot.com](http://www.divisaderoartwalk.blogspot.com). 6pm, free. Get in touch with the burgeoning art scene on Divisadero street, with 35 participating merchants offering specials, art, music, and community. **Oy Vey!** Contemporary Jewish Museum, 736 Mission, SF; (415) 655-7800. 5pm; free, \$5 admission to exhibits and programs. Kvetch with friends over drinks after work while enjoying some art and architecture. Featuring Susan G. Solomon giving a talk titled, *The Art of Listening: Oral Histories from Voice of Witness and StoryCorps*.

**Art and Wine for PACT** San Francisco PACT office, 635 Divisadero, SF; (415) 922-2550 to RSVP. Enjoy wine tasting, food, and student made art at this fundraiser for PACT, Inc., a non-profit that provides low income and first generation students guidance through the college, financial aid, and scholarship application processes.

## FRIDAY 4

**Art.tech** The Lab, 2948 16th St., SF; (415) 864-8855. Fri. 8pm, Sat. 1-8pm, Sun. 1-7pm; \$12-20 sliding scale per day, \$36 for a three day pass, \$8 for single evening performance. A festival of art, performance, sound, workshops, demos, and lectures featuring cutting-edge artistic experiments created with and related to technology.

## SATURDAY 5

**Food For Thought** Toby's Feed Barn, 11250 State Route One, Point Reyes Station; (415) 663-1542. 7pm, free. Hear author David Mas Masumoto read from his books and talk about his experience as a third generation organic peach and grape farmer, whose organic farming techniques have been widely adopted.

## SUNDAY 6

**Penguins to Penguins** Great Highway, connecting Golden Gate Park to the San Francisco Zoo, SF; [sundaystreetsf.com](http://sundaystreetsf.com). 10am, free. Take advantage of this month's Sunday Streets, a safe, fun, car-free area for people to get out and get active in San Francisco neighborhoods.

## TUESDAY 8

**Lang Lang** Zellerbach Auditorium, UC Berkeley Campus, 2430 Bancroft Way, Berk; (510) 642-9988. 7:30pm, \$20. Hear this highly influential Chinese pianist interview with Sarah Cahill, also a pianist, from KALW's Sunday evening show *Then and Now*, about his new book, *Journey of a Thousand Miles* in this program and book signing. **SFBG**



# See monsters

It's a *Big Machine*, it's a mean machine, it's a big, mean story by Victor LaValle

By D. Scot Miller  
a&eletters@sfbg.com



**REVIEW** Naomi Ophelia Lamar was my cousin, but my big sister. Six years older than me, she ran away from home at 16. Though we stayed in touch, too many years of no contact had changed us both. We tried but could never close the distance. Last year, they found her body in a Dumpster in Birmingham, Ala. She'd been stabbed over 30 times. Her husband had done it. Afterward, he drove to the nearest bridge and threw himself off. She was the grandmother of three. I sat in the bathroom screaming, "We are not garbage!"

Bizarre and horrible things happen. They just do. They happen to us, around us, and because of us. Sometimes the horrible things only become horrible on reflection. We liked them at the time. Sometimes the bizarre things become so commonplace that they stop being bizarre. Both bizarre and horrible things become badges of distinction and honor when we survive. When we answer the call and stagger to daylight.

This is the general premise of Victor LaValle's *Big Machine* (Spiegel & Grau, 284 pages, \$25), which opens with a look at Ricky Rice, a middle-aged porter in a bus depot in Utica, N.Y. It's 2005, and the world is about to go broke. Ricky's a downtrodden sanitation worker with a shady past. He's never seen better days, and none seem to be forthcoming. That is, until he receives a mysterious note reminding him of The Promise he made: a one-way bus ticket to Vermont's northeast kingdom. On the bus to the frigid north, we hear LaValle's refrain from an alcoholic goblin on a tear to his captive audience: "*Human beings are no damn good. We even worse than animals. We like ...*"

The ellipsis just dangles, from the book's first section on. As the events of *Big Machine* unfolded, I realized that that very phrase, and that very ellipsis, had been hanging from my lips since last year. It is the jump-off point for LaValle's book, and as we travel with Ricky Rice — alongside him, but also inside his mind as it

seeks justification and reason — we begin to understand why.

*Big Machine* is a crafty book. Every page is a precise and illuminating reveal — a large veil playfully lifted from the reader's initial conceptions of black/white, good/evil, and ultimately, salvation. Each chapter is a possible spoiler. A tough job for the reviewer, to be sure. Especially one who has been anticipating such a novel (and working on such a novel) for years.

Behold the invisible! You shall see unknown worlds: Ricky is recruited, along with six other recovering addicts and petty criminals to become a paranormal investigator. All of them have heard The Voice at the deep bottom of their shoddy existences and answered it with The Promise. Like generations of wretched of the earth before them, they are inducted into a secret society of "negros" ("I won't say African Americans," says Rice, "it's too damn long") to find The Voice and figure out what it wants.

From cleaning out bathroom stalls in work boots and T-shirts, Ricky becomes a dandy, wearing the finest clothes that the 1940s and 1950s could provide. Fitted in the best vines, he makes his way to (where else?) the Bay Area to confront a murder-suicide cult, and his own monstrous past.

Far from a standard dry examination of doubt and faith, LaValle's allegorical approach is sweeping and swashbuckling. *Big Machine* takes us from Ricky's idyllic childhood — sweet as saccharine, with a black tar of burn — to his romantic nadir, dying in a puddle of piss and shit in the basement of a house owned by a man named Murder.

LaValle has named Shirley Jackson and Ambrose Pierce as influences, along with those he calls "the Black Eccentrics": Ishmael Reed, Gayle Jones, Darth Vader. His approach to gothic horror adds black Black humor and a new element of ferocity to the AfroSurreal aesthetic.

There's a lot of tearing in this book. Flesh is peeled, pried, burned, punctured. Torture plays a prominent role. Children are exploited, souls are gnawed away, and spirits are broken. Bullets fly, bodies are wrenched, mauled, mutilated and discarded — so much so that LaValle's

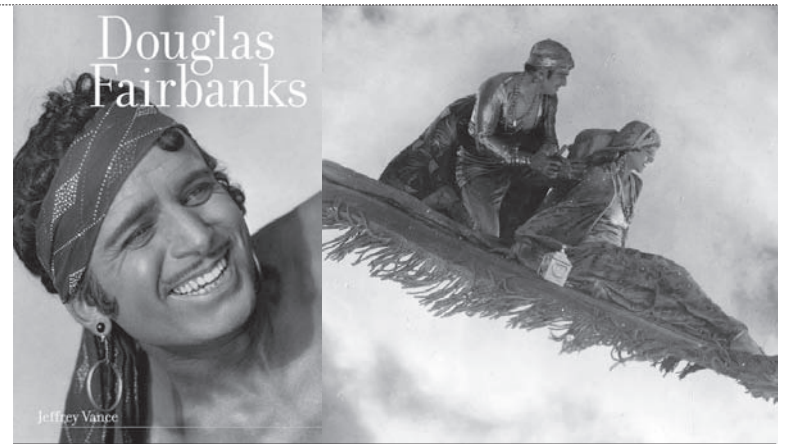


main refrain takes on greater weight when it reappears, in extended form, from the mouth of one of *Big Machine*'s main characters. "Human beings are no damn good!" the character says. "The despised become the despicable. God Damn! We worse than animals! We're like monsters."

Monsters. *Big Machine* has those too. Some wear suits, some wear shawls, some move between the shadows with vise-grip hands. The story is neither miserable nor grotesque, and it is proof of LaValle's genius that sympathy and forgiveness extends to the whole pitiful lot.

I've been following LaValle since I read his 1999 short story collection *Slapboxing With Jesus* (which takes its title from a Ghostface Killah quote), and followed it up by reading 2003's *The Ecstatic* (which in turn inspired Mos Def to title his latest album the same). Mos Def contributed a blurb to *Big Machine*, and the book's blurbs are telling: according to them, LaValle is Marquez mixed with Poe, or Marakami mixed with Ellison, or Bosch having a baby with Lenny Bruce. But I feel they all miss the mark — I'm here to tell you that Victor LaValle is a believer in the unseen world. He has been there, and what he has brought back has affirmed my belief too. Yes, there are monsters out there, and what's an AfroSurrealist supposed to do?

"I guess we could lock ourselves in the bathroom and hide. Let someone else face the fight," says Ricky. "But we're not going to do that." **SFBG**



**UNBUCKLING THE SWASHBUCKLER: A NEW BIO SHINES A LIGHT ON WHAT DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS LEFT BEHIND**

**REVIEW** Given the phenomenal success of Johnny Depp's *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise, a revival of appreciation for the granddaddy of all cinematic swashbucklers, Douglas Fairbanks, is long overdue. Perfect accompaniment for home entertainment viewing of the silent film star arrives in the form of film historian Jeffrey Vance's gorgeously laid out biography *Douglas Fairbanks* (University of California Press, 376 pages, \$45).

*Douglas Fairbanks* was published with the assistance of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, so perhaps it's to be expected that the prose sometimes skirts close to hagiography. But Vance, who has authored studies of Buster Keaton, Charles Chaplin, and Harold Lloyd, knows his silent film history. He provides a wealth of information about the productions of Fairbanks' major pictures (including 1920's *The Mark of Zorro*, 1921's *The Three Musketeers*, 1922's *Douglas Fairbanks in Robin Hood*, 1924's *The Thief of Bagdad*, and 1926's *The Black Pirate*). The chapters about the big costume epics are bracketed by discussions of the earlier non-costume silents and the few sound projects Fairbanks worked on. Throughout, the text is complemented by beautiful reproductions of photos of Fairbanks and his friends and family on and off set.

Audiences came to expect incredible displays of acrobatic athleticism from the one-time stage actor. "There was no living man as graceful," says Allan Dwan, who directed several Fairbanks pictures. Upon scouting locations at the Grand Canyon for *A Modern Musketeer* (1917), Fairbanks commented that he was disappointed because "I couldn't jump it."

Vance argues that Fairbanks was instrumental in shaping most aspects of his productions, which wielded a major influence on 20th century pop culture. Errol Flynn grew up worshipping Fairbanks and saluted his hero by starring in his own version of the Robin Hood story (1938's *The Adventures of Robin Hood*). Bob Kane, creator of Batman, tells Vance that Fairbanks's depiction of Zorro ("a fop by day and a crusader at night") inspired the caped crusader's costume, secret lair, and dual identity. Vance argues that Superman bore a heavy Fairbanks influence. Fairbanks also receives credit for popularizing the dark suntan, leaving us to wonder where George Hamilton or the Sonny Bono Cocoa Butter Open would have been without the great man's example.

After he left his first wife for Mary Pickford, the actress dubbed "America's sweetheart," Fairbanks climbed to heights of celebrity rarely attained by movie actors in the 1920s. Perhaps only Chaplin rivaled his peak fame. When Pickford and Fairbanks arrived in London in 1920, their entourage was mobbed, leaving Pickford briefly in fear for her life. From all indications they adjusted fairly well to this state of affairs, since both relished the limelight (Alexander Woolcott describes their post-marital jaunt as "the most exhausting and conspicuous honeymoon in the history of the marriage institution"). In order to gain more creative and financial control over their work, the couple used their new clout to join Chaplin and D.W. Griffith in founding United Artists.

Eighty-plus years on, the Fairbanks charisma can still wow an audience. And, at the risk of stressing the deadly obvious, DVD viewing really cannot do full justice to spectaculars made for the silver screen. At this year's Silent Film Festival at the Castro Theatre, I had the privilege of taking in the 1927 feature *Douglas Fairbanks in The Gaucho*, which included plenty of leaping — and some tremendous vine-swinging which had the packed house screaming with pleasure. By that point well into his 40s and seemingly attempting to set a record for cinematic chain-smoking, Fairbanks was still near the acme of his physical powers. Portraying a more complex, jaded hero than in his earlier movies, he had put aside his discomfort with love scenes, thanks partly to co-star Lupe Velez, with whom he was having an affair. Ironically, Pickford appears in the film as an apparition of the Virgin Mary.

A dear friend who attended all of the Silent Film Festival responded to a questionnaire asking her to name the highlight of the weekend by writing "Douglas Fairbanks' ass." Clearly, though he is dead and gone, his star shines on. **(Ben Terrall)**



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# food + drink

Liberty Cafe's bountiful dishes — like spinach salad, left — and dependable pleasantries still entice, despite recent changes.

GUARDIAN PHOTOS BY RORY MCNAMARA



## Give me Liberty, or ...

By Paul Reidinger  
paulr@sfbg.com

Not all restaurants have authors — central figures that breathe their essence into a place — but the ones that do tend to be special. They are also uniquely vulnerable, for if that central figure disappears, a restaurant can be left adrift without its animating force, like a fully-rigged sailing ship on a breezeless sea.

In January, Cathie Guntli, the founder and guiding light of the Liberty Café, died. She opened the place in Bernal Heights in 1994, in a woody Victorian storefront space along then-backwatery Cortland Avenue, and the restaurant quickly established itself as one of the city's new neighborhood jewels. It was the Firefly of Bernal.

Since Guntli's death, Liberty Café has passed into new hands associated with Hard Knox Café and Sally's. So far the change in ownership is not visible; the restaurant looks the same and the general new-American tenor of the food is familiar. The menu still features the famous chicken pot pie. The real changes can be found outside the restaurant; Bernal Heights was a sleepy little hill town 15 years ago, but it isn't anymore. The commercial district along Cortland has bloomed with shiny new restaurants in recent years, and Liberty Café, which began as an outpost or beacon of sorts, no

longer holds that distinction. These days, in fact, its homey Victorian look seems almost quaint.

The restaurant has long adhered to a no-reservations policy. This can complicate patrons' planning, but it does help keep tables full, particularly if there is a steady stream of passersby on foot and a loyal clientele. Liberty enjoys both advantages, and it isn't hard to see why: it's kid-friendly and modestly priced, and it's in the middle of a walk-friendly zone.

Still, there are signs of stress. The dining room strikes me as slightly understaffed; although Liberty Café is barely bigger than tiny, with 32 seats divided between two rooms, you can almost see the front-of-house staff — a single server, maybe two, aided by a couple of bussers — panting to keep up. People must be met and greeted, summoned from the wait list, and then seated. The no-reservation system is an efficient way of filling tables, but it adds an extra step or two to the service, and that is enough to stretch the staff.

The food is a quirky mix of modesty and elegance, although the balance now tips more toward the former. As if in compensation, portions are quite generous. If you like caesar salad, for instance, you'd have trouble finding a better deal than Liberty's (\$7): a looming plateful of immaculately crisp romaine spears tossed with croutons and tabs of Parmesan cheese

under a light fall of grated Parmesan — like the first snow of winter. No anchovies, though, alas.

The house-baked breads and dinner rolls flow out to the tables in a steady stream. While they are tasty and satisfying on their own if smeared with a bit of softened butter, they're also useful if you happen to have ordered soup. The soup (\$7 for a broad bowl) changes daily; it could be of portobello mushroom, a thick pottage tasting intensely of the earth and decorated only with a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese. I had mixed feelings about this soup; there was no doubting the purity of its flavor, but it looked like mud. A bit of colorful festooning wouldn't have hurt.

There was plenty of color on a plate of seared ahi (\$18): purplish fish in thin slabs, pale-green chunks of ripe avocado, brilliant red pear tomatoes, halved and *very* ripe. The tuna had been well-coated with cracked pepper for some extra jolt, and the dish as a whole fluently spoke the language of summer. But the tomatoes and avocado didn't seem quite coherent; they were meant to be a salad, but they behaved like junior-high boys and girls reluctant to mix at a dance.

Impressive coherence was achieved with the vegetarian pot pie (\$13), a meatless version of the chicken pot pie. Under a disk of golden pastry (a treat in itself) lurked a potpourri of cauliflower florets, carrots, and lentils in a thick mushroom slurry. The effect was surprisingly

autumnal (on a warm night, no less), and at first I hoped for and missed the flavor of curry, but the milder flavor accreted bite by bite in a swelling crescendo. Even so, I couldn't finish it. Two fairly hungry people could share one and come away happy, and I call that value. They could also probably share — but might end up fighting over — the exceptionally tasty country-fried pork chop (\$17), slathered with white gravy and served with cheesy grits and bacon-braised kale.

Given Liberty Café's bakery chops, the pies — I speak now of the dessert kind — are generally estimable. Cherry (\$7), for instance, featured an avalanche of wondrous sour cherries the color of a good red Bordeaux and with just enough sweetness to qualify as a dessert. If not a slice of pie, then perhaps some butterscotch pudding (\$7), served in a goblet and deeply tasty despite some feathery remnants of scalded milk. It was good but could have been, should have been better. And for now, that's the way it is at Liberty Café. **SFBG**

### THE LIBERTY CAFÉ

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# CONCERT UPDATE

**FEATURED SHOW**



**JOHN SANTOS SEXTET**  
9/4 DE YOUNG MUSEUM

**THIS WEEK**

**MOS DEF & ERYKAH BADU**  
9/3 Davies Symphony Hall

**THE NELS CLINE SINGERS**  
9/3 Cafe du Nord

**THE TUBES**  
9/5 Great American Music Hall

**STOCKHOLM SYNDROME**  
9/5 Independent

**WAVVES**  
9/6 Rickshaw Stop

**JOHN LEGEND**  
9/6 Greek Theatre

**MONOTONIX TRICLOPS**  
9/17 Independent

**BEN HARPER & RELENTLESS**  
9/17 Fox Theater

**CITIZEN COPE**  
9/18-19 Fillmore

**PINK MOUNTAINTOPS**  
9/20 Independent

**REVOLTING COCKS**  
9/23 Fillmore

**BLITZEN TRAPPER**  
9/27 Independent

**KYLIE MINOGUE**  
9/30 Fox Theater

**SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE**  
10/13 Fillmore

**THE JESUS LIZARD**  
10/17 The Fillmore

**ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN**  
10/22 Fox Theater

**MIKA**  
10/24 Fox Theater

**REGINA SPEKTOR**  
10/30 Fox Theater

**RODRIGO Y GABRIELA**  
9/23 Fox Theater

**OM LICHENS**  
9/24 Independent

**BON IVER**  
9/24 Fox Theater

**GALACTIC**  
9/25 Fillmore

**PAULINA RUBIO**  
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## Corn on the curb

By L.E. Leone

le.chicken.farmer@gmail.com

**CHEAP EATS** I pick up my brother at the airport. It might not always be the Oakland airport, but I will always pick up my brother at the airport. Besides love,



there's corn in it for me. Ohio corn. I didn't know about this angle when I tried to lift his suitcase, while he was busy with a big ragged box with duct tape all over it, situating this in the back of my little car — just so, because that's the way he is.

Me, I've been struggling with the Meaning of Life a little lately, and you never know where you will find a sense of purpose. Why not at the curb outside of baggage claim? I didn't know, I just thought I would make myself useful.

I got the suitcase about an eighth of an inch off of the ground, then decided to just wait quietly for my hug, and let it back down.

"I'll get that," he said. After he got it, after the hug, we were driving away and he said, "Do you know what's in that suitcase?"

"Something really very heavy," I said.

And that was when he said, "Corn."

"Ah," I said, as if corn, all things considered, made perfect sense.

"Ohio corn," he said. "Picked this morning. Four dozen ears of Ohio corn."

"OK then," I said.

He had me go through his old neighborhood, which is West Oakland, because he wanted to leave some on his ex's steps, and his buddy Ron's steps, and for all I knew some other people's steps.

But it was 10:30 at night and I wondered about raccoons and other terrorists. I wondered this out loud.

"You're right," he said. "I'll deliver it in the morning." And we got back on the freeway.

We went to my house and started eating the corn in my kitchen, standing up. We didn't bother to boil it or anything, and it was pretty good, but I still didn't know about bringing four dozen ears of fresh corn on an airplane to California. It seemed a little illegal, if not — I don't know — pointless.

"The fact is," I said to my brother, halfway through my first ear, "we do have corn here." To

illustrate my point, I opened the refrigerator and showed him an ear. I'd just bought it at the grocery store. It seemed pretty fresh too. This is California.

"Ohio corn," he said. There was a piece of it on his chin, and his eyes looked glazed, maybe because of the time difference.

I'm supposed to be a food writer, and I wasn't sure I could tell the difference. It was good, yes. I ate another piece, steamed, at my cousin Choo-Choo's house the next day. It was great.

But sometimes I get a great ear of corn at the farmers market, too. I guess the meaning of life is that corn means different things to different people, and while a lot of people have little brothers, few if any of them arrive at the Oakland airport with a suitcase full of corn. So there's that.

Grateful, charmed, and educated, I offered him my life. My cabin, the kids, this column. He said he'd take my records, and my car. "It's all or nothing," I said. And for the next couple days I went around buying ears of corn at all the local markets.

I'd pay 99 cents (in some cases) for one ear of locally grown organic corn, and eat it raw, or in some cases cooked, and of course in other cases barbecued. And you know what? It never tasted as good as my brother's suitcase-smuggled Ohio corn.

Which is gone. My brother's still here, for a couple more weeks. I called him and said, "OK, you can have my records."

He deserves them, but mostly I just love to think of one of my sisters picking him up at the airport in Ohio, trying to lift his suitcase, or his big taped-up box, and not getting it more than an eighth of an inch off the ground.

"Do you know what's in there?" he'll say. And she'll never guess. I wrote this while eating a Vietnamese sandwich at:

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L.E. Leone's new book is *Big Bend* (Sparkle Street Books), a collection of short fiction.

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## film

New releases this week offer characters under the influence of Ozu (*Still Walking*) and Uzis (*The Baader Meinhof Complex*).

STILL WALKING PHOTO COURTESY OF STILL WALKING PRODUCTION COMMITTEE;  
THE BAADER MEINHOF COMPLEX PHOTO COURTESY OF CONSTANTIN FILM VERLEIH GMBH



# Nuclear implosion

*Still Walking* observes a family in quiet crisis

By Dennis Harvey  
a&eletters@sfbg.com

Hirokazu Kore-eda's 1998 *After Life* stepped into a bureaucratic beyond. His 2001 *Distance* probed the aftermath of a religious cult's mass suicide. Likewise loosely inspired by fact, *Nobody Knows* (2004) charted the survival of an abandoning mother's practically feral children in a Tokyo apartment. 2006's *Hana* was a splashy samurai story — albeit one atypically resistant to conventional action.

Despite their shared character nuance, these prior features don't quite prepare one for the very ordinary milieu and domestic dramatics of *Still Walking*. Kore-eda's latest recalls no less than Ozu in its seemingly casual yet meticulous dissection of a broken family still awkwardly bound — if just for one last visit — by the onerous traditions and institution of “family” itself. There's no conceptually hooky lure here. Yet *Walking* is arguably both Kore-eda's finest hour

so far, and as emotionally rich a movie experience as 2009 has yet afforded.

One day every summer the entire Yokohama clan assembles to commemorate an eldest son's accidental death 15 years earlier. This duty calls, even if art restorer Ryota (Hiroshi Abe) chafes at retired M.D. dad's (Yoshio Harada) obvious disappointment over his career choice, at the insensitivity of his chatterbox mum (Kiri Kirin), and at being eternally compared to a retroactively sainted sibling. Even more so now that Ryo now has a bride (Yui Natsukawa) and son (Shohei Tanaka) eager to please their new in-laws — though they're already damned as widow and another man's child.

Not subject to such evaluative harshness is many-foibled sole Yokohama daughter Chinami (*Nobody Knows*' oblivious, helium-voiced mum You). Simply because she's a girl — so dim-bulb husband and running-wild kids get the pass stern grandpa denies prodigal son

Ryo and company. Small crises, subtle tensions, the routines of food preparation, and other minutiae ghost-drive a narrative whose warm, familiar, pained, touching, and sometimes hilarious progress seldom leaves the small-town parental home interior — yet never feels claustrophobic in the least.

There's a whiff of compromise in a coda that feels compelled to spell out the reconciliatory note already hard-won through inference. (Gratuitous sentimentality is a habit Japanese non-genre cinema often finds hard to kick.) Nonetheless, this is Kore-eda's most truly naturalistic, let alone Ozu-like film since his first — the comparatively bleak 1995 *Maborosi* — as well as a dysfunctional-family seriocomic uncommonly beautiful inside and out. It's a quietly funny and insightful two hours capable of inducing one pretty ecstatic afterglow. **SFBG**

**STILL WALKING** opens Fri/4 in Bay Area theaters.

## BAADER TO THE BONE

“The Baader Meinhof gang? Those spoiled, hipster terrorists?” That was the response of one knowledgeable pop watcher when I told her about *The Baader Meinhof Complex*, the new feature from Uli Edel (1989's *Last Exit to Brooklyn*). The violence-prone West German anarchist group, otherwise known as the Red Army Faction (RAF), still inspires both venomous spew and starry-eyed fascination (see Joe Strummer's RAF T-shirt, Gerhard Richter's paintings of its dead leaders, and Erin Cosgrove's 2003 satirical romance paperback, *The Baader-Meinhof Affair*). Edel's sober, clear-eyed view of the youthful and sexy yet arrogant and murderous, gun-toting radicals at the center of Baader-Meinhof's mythology — a complex construct, indeed — manages to do justice to the core of their sprawling chronology, while never overstating their narrative's obvious post-9/11 relevance.

Based on the nonfiction best-seller by onetime *Der Spiegel* editor Stefan Aust, *The Baader Meinhof Complex* finds its still, watchful center in Ulrike Meinhof (Martina Gedeck). Aust's onetime fourth-estate colleague makes the dramatic trajectory from bourgeois wife and mother to underground radical crawling through Mideast dust and toting a machine gun under the tutelage of Fatah. She's shocked by brutal police crackdowns on the student protests against the visiting shah of Iran and America's Vietnam War — enacted with a cruelty reminiscent of the one-generation-removed SS and a reminder of a not-so-distant fascist past — and somewhat in awe of Andreas Baader (Moritz Bleibtreu) and Gudrun Ensslin (Johanna Wokalek), who emit rock-star charisma.

Helping to bust Baader out of jail on the pretext of working on a book, Meinhof joins her crushes in life on the lam. The three and their followers declare an urban guerrilla war on West Germany until they are nabbed and stuck in solitary at Stammheim Prison. While their trial descends into bitter, kangaroo court-style comedy, the RAF members outside resort to heightened feats of bloodshed and desperation in the so-called “German Autumn” of 1977, killing the chief federal prosecutor, kidnapping a banker, and finally conspiring in the hijacking of a Lufthansa jet.

Edel has absorbed his share of criticism for his RAF portrayal: the director's far from sympathetic when it comes to these self-absorbed, smug rebels, who relish offending their Muslim hosts by sunbathing nude, yet he's not immune to their cocky, idealistic charms. Cool-headed yet fully capable of thrilling to his subjects' eye-popping audacity, the filmmaker does an admirable job of contextualizing the group within the global student and activist movements and bringing the viewer, authentically, to the still timely question: how does one best (i.e., morally) respond to terrorism? (**Kimberly Chun**)

**THE BAADER MEINHOF COMPLEX** opens Fri/4 in Bay Area theaters.



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## Bliss

**» REVIEW** American regional differences and disparities between rural and urban culture have nothing on their Turkish counterparts. Abdullah Oguz's *Bliss* (a title that initially seems cruelly ironic) begins in a village in eastern Turkey where Islamic law still dictates that women be killed for breaches of sexual purity, even when they are victims of rape. Young Meryem (Ozgu Namal) shudders in isolation in a shed, receiving food and deprecation from her stepmother. All that is apparent in the beginning is that there has been some sort of transgression which dictates that a young male relative escort her out of the village to be sacrificed in order to restore the honor of the family. That duty falls on Cemal (Murat Han), her seemingly impassive distant cousin who has just returned from military service. What is initially perceived as a simple task by Cemal becomes complicated as he quietly develops affection for Meryem despite his outward hostility. The culture clash becomes evident when they arrive in Istanbul, and Cemal's task is received with disdain by a family member who declares that Istanbul is no place for his backwoods customs. A military bud is more diplomatic and provides the awkward duo a remote hiding place related to his fishery business, an act of kindness that can hopefully spare Cemal from the rage of the village elder who ordered the honor killing. As the taciturn two — Meryem tremulous and Cemal brooding — befriend a progressive professor (Talat Bulut), on the run from a stiflingly bourgeois existence, who takes them aboard his sailboat, the tone shifts. At once bliss, however improbable, seems possible. Though Meryem and the professor are more readily sympathetic characters, it is Cemal who is the most intriguing and who represents the power of the film — the quiet, conflicted, and gradual revelations that constitute the necessary pains of progress, both psychological and societal. (Kevin Langson)

BLISS opens Fri/4 at the Roxie.

Film listings are edited by Cheryl Eddy. Reviewers are Kimberly Chun, Michelle Devereaux, Max Goldberg, Dennis Harvey, Johnny Ray Huston, Louis Peitzman, Lynn Rapoport, Ben Richardson, and Matt Sussman. The film intern is Laura Swanbeck. For rep house showtimes, see Rep Clock. For first-run showtimes, see Movie Guide at [www.sfbg.com](http://www.sfbg.com). For complete film listings, see [www.sfbg.com](http://www.sfbg.com).

### OPENING

**All About Steve** Sandra Bullock: wacko in love. (1:38)

**The Baader Meinhof Complex** See “Baader to the Bone.” (2:24) *Embarcadero, Smith Rafael.*

**The Beautiful Person** In this wistful reimagining of Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves*, director Christophe Honoré's *La Belle Personne* transplants forbidden love and courtly intrigue from 17th century France to a modern, high school setting. After her mother dies, Junie (Léa Seydoux) transfers schools and captures the hearts of the introverted Otto (Grégoire Leprince-Ringuet) and the fickle lothario, Professor Nemours (Louis Garrel). When an anonymous love letter rumored to have been written by Nemours surfaces, scandal ensues leading to unexpectedly dire consequences. As in his acclaimed *Les Chansons d'Amour* (2007) starring Garrel alongside Ludvine Sagnier, Honoré excels at using music and poetry to capture the existential mal-

aise of young adulthood. However, once Nemours enters the scene in *La Belle Personne*, the focus unfortunately shifts to his unrequited, overblown passion for Junie as the promising interplay between the close-knit circle of friends takes a backseat. While Honoré's romantic film eventually becomes mired in melodrama, the enigmatic Seydoux — a Anna Karina for the 21st century set — stands out as a refreshingly thoughtful French heroine whose mother's death inadvertently causes ripples in her relationships. (1:30) *Sundance Kabuki.* (Swanbeck)

**Bliss** See pick box. (1:45)

**Roxie.**

**Extract** As Cindy (Mila Kunis), a charming con artist, pilfers a guitar out from under two love-struck chumps in a music store in the opening of *Extract*, you may hope that this charged momentum will last throughout Mike Judge's latest. Unfortunately, the film lags as he shifts the perspective from Kunis' wild child to Joel (Jason Bateman), a sexually frustrated factory owner. When an idiotic employee gets into a debilitating accident, sticky-fingered Cindy sees a hefty settlement deal in her future and joins the factory as a temp, catching Joel's eye. Struggling with feuding employees and his new workplace crush, Joel turns to his friend, Dean (Ben Affleck), who doles out pills as quick as he does advice on how to pimp out Joel's wife, Suzie (Kristen Wiig), so that he can score with Cindy. While *Extract* might make you crack a smile with its goofball supporting cast, including Dustin Milligan as Brad, the dimwitted gigolo, the film never reaches its full potential and the impressive pool of comedic talent is ultimately left high and dry. (1:31) *Presidio.* (Swanbeck)

**Gamer** Hate the game, not the player (Gerard Butler). (1:36) *Shattuck.*

**My One and Only** Renée Zellweger stars as a 1950s glamourpuss who leaves her cheatin' husband and takes a road trip with her two sons. (1:48) *Embarcadero.*

**Still Walking** See “Nuclear Implosion.” (1:54) *Lumiere, Shattuck, Smith Rafael.*

### ONGOING

**Adam** (1:39)

*Elmwood, Opera Plaza.*

**Afghan Star** (1:28)

*Shattuck.*

**Cold Souls** (1:51)

*Bridge.*

**The Cove** (1:36)

*Opera Plaza, Smith Rafael.*

**District 9** As allegories go, *District 9* is not all that subtle. This is a sci-fi action flick that's really all about racial intolerance — and to drive the point home, they went and set it in South Africa. Here's the set-up: 20 years ago, an alien ship arrived and got stuck, hovering above the Earth. Faster than you can say “apartheid,” the alien refugees were confined to a camp — the titular District 9 — where they have remained in slum-level conditions. As science fiction, it's creative; as a metaphor, it's effective. What's most surprising about *District 9* is the way everything comes together. This is a big, bloody summer blockbuster with feelings: for every viscera-filled splatter, there's a moment of poignant social commentary, and nothing ever feels forced or overdone. Writer-director Neill Blomkamp has found the perfect balance and created a film that doesn't have to compromise. *District 9* is a profoundly distressing look at the human condition. It's also one hell of a good time. (1:52) *Cerrito, Empire, Grand Lake, Marina, 1000 Van Ness, Sundance Kabuki.* (Peitzman)

**Empty Nest** (1:32) *Smith Rafael.*

**The Final Destination** It takes a certain kind of person to appreciate the *Final Destination* series: you have to accept the splatter film as a legitimate genre, to understand that good gore is an art, and to know that taking some movies too seriously is your own damn fault. If the above apply, there's a good chance you'll enjoy *The Final Destination*, the fourth addition to the absurdly violent franchise. You know this story already — main character flashes on a terrible disaster (here it's a race track crash-turned-collapse) and is able to escape before it actually happens, thereby saving himself and his friends. Messing with Death's plan, however, has its price, and the survivors are picked off in the order in which they were supposed to die. There's no real twist in this installment. The characters are predictably two-dimensional, the deaths are impossibly ridiculous and satisfyingly gross. Ah, but *The Final Destination* is in 3D, which does breathe new life into the formula. Viscera is viscera, but viscera in 3D gives you that I'll-never-be-clean-again feeling. Cringe-tastic. (1:22) *Grand Lake, 1000 Van Ness, SF Center.* (Peitzman)

**(500) Days of Summer** (1:36) *California, Four*

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**Flame and Citroen** (2:10) Clay, Elmwood.

**Food, Inc.** (1:34)  
 Opera Plaza.

**Funny People** (2:20) 1000 Van Ness, Shattuck.  
**G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra** (1:47) 1000 Van Ness,  
 SF Center.

**Halloween II** (1:41) 1000 Van Ness.

**The Hangover** (1:45)  
 1000 Van Ness.

**Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince**  
 (2:33) 1000 Van Ness.

**The Hurt Locker** (2:11) Embarcadero, Shattuck.

**In the Loop** (1:49) Albany, Embarcadero,  
 Smith Rafael.

**IngLOURious Basterds** With *IngLOURious Basterds* Quentin Tarantino pulls off something that seemed not only impossible, but undesirable, and surely unnecessary: making yet another of his in-joke movies about other movies, albeit one that also happens to be kinda about the Holocaust — or at least Jews getting their own back on the Nazis during World War II — and (the kicker) is *not* inherently repulsive. As Rube Goldbergian achievements go, this is up there. Nonetheless, *Basterds* is more fun, with less guilt, than it has any right to be. The “basterds” are Tennessee moonshiner Pvt. Brad Pitt’s unit of Jewish soldiers committed to infuriating Der Fuhrer by literally scalping all the uniformed Nazis they can bag. Meanwhile a survivor (Mélanie Laurent) of one of insidious SS “Jew Hunter” Christoph Waltz’s raids, now passing as racially “pure” and operating a Paris cinema (imagine the cineaste name-dropping possibilities!) finds her venue hosting a Third Reich hoedown that provides an opportunity to nuke Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, and Goering in one swoop. Tactically, Tarantino’s movies have always been about the ventriloquizing of that yadadada-yadadada whose self-consciousness is bearable because the cleverness is actual; brief eruptions of lasciviously enjoyed violence aside, *Basterds* too almost entirely consists of lengthy dialogues or near-monologues in which characters pitch and receive tasty palaver amid lethal danger. Still, even if he’s practically writing theatre now, Tarantino does understand the language of cinema. There isn’t a pin-sharp edit, actor’s raised eyebrow, artful design excess, or musical incongruity here that isn’t just the business. (2:30) California, Castro, Cerrito, Four Star, Grand Lake, Marina, 1000 Van Ness, SF Center, Shattuck, Sundance Kabuki. (Harvey)

**Irene in Time** (1:35) Opera Plaza.

**It Might Get Loud** A once-in-a-lifetime chance to capture three guitar gods on camera — or a squandered opportunity? I’m leaning toward the latter with *It Might Get Loud*. The doc’s MO: a close look at three rock guitarists — Jimmy Page, the Edge, and Jack White — and their musical life and relationship to the electric guitar. We get snapshots of each musician’s trajectory, a few lyrical vignettes — Page shows us around the house where Led Zeppelin recorded *IV*, White plays music with a child that seems to represent the boy within — and a sit-down in which the players chat each other up and jam on a few tunes together. The title of the doc itself comes from the ultra-mild-mannered Edge’s offhand comment regarding his own guitarwork. Unfortunately, in an effort to make a supposedly even-handed portrait of the ax slingers, filmmaker Davis Guggenheim (2007’s *An Inconvenient Truth*) simply skates over the surface of all three. And frankly the performers are poorly matched: Page is obviously much more of a monumental rock ‘n’ roll figure, with many more stories, to tell than either the Edge or White — Led Zep fans may tear up at the missed moments. Too bad the director chooses to play journalistic softball — or lacks the knowledge, courage, or insight to go after the tales from, say, the White Stripes, Raconteurs, and Dead Weather leader that would have really given this film its teeth or, well, edge. (1:37) Embarcadero, Shattuck. (Chun)

**Julie and Julia** As Julie Powell, disillusioned secretary by day and culinary novice by night, Amy Adams stars as a woman who decides to cook and blog her way through 524 of Julia Child’s recipes in 365 days. Nora Ephron oscillates between Julie’s drab existence in modern-day New York and the exciting life of culinary icon and expatriate, Julia Child (Meryl Streep), in 1950s Paris. As Julia gains confidence in the kitchen by besting all the men at the Cordon Bleu, Julie follows suit, despite strains on both her marriage and job. While Streep’s Julia borders on caricature at first, her performance eventually becomes more nuanced as the character’s insecurities about cooking, infertility, and getting published slowly emerge. Although a feast for the eyes and a rare portrait of a female over 40, Ephron’s cinematic concoction leaves you longing for less Julie with her predictable empowerment storyline and more of Julia and

CONTINUES ON PAGE 44 »

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Streep's exuberance and infectious joie de vivre. (2:03) *Elmwood, Empire, 1000 Van Ness, Piedmont, Presidio, SF Center, Sundance Kabuki.* (Swanbeck)

**Moon** (1:37) *Lumiere.*

**Paper Heart** (1:29) *Elmwood.*

**Ponyo** (1:40) *Grand Lake, Shattuck, Sundance Kabuki.*

**Post Grad** (1:29) *1000 Van Ness.*

**Pressure Cooker** (1:39) *Smith Rafael.*

**Shorts** (1:29) *1000 Van Ness.*

**Somers Town** Black and white photography born out of technical necessity transforms *Somers Town* into a stark and poignant portrait of the drudgery and displacement of two wayward youths in modern-day England. Tomo (Thomas Turgoose), a cheeky runaway who perhaps in a past life was a Dickensian street urchin, flees Nottingham and hops aboard a train bound for London, seeking refuge from the banality of life in the Midlands. Cornered in an alleyway, robbed, and beaten, Tomo finally finds a reluctant and unlikely friend in Marek (Piotr Jagiello), a Polish immigrant who just moved to the U.K. Unbeknownst to his father, Marek begins hiding his homeless friend in his flat. Joining forces, the two boys bond by working odd jobs for their cockney landlord, stealing clothes from a local launderette, and fighting for the affections of a charming French waitress. Director Shane Meadows (2006's *This is England*) instills *Somers Town* with humanity and humor mined from class and culture shock, but he doesn't shy away from showing the pain of feeling adrift in a new city or country. (1:10) *Lumiere, Shattuck.* (Swanbeck)

**Taking Woodstock** The received notion that Woodstock was a cultural benchmark finds its most nostalgic, weirdly de-energized iteration with this Ang Lee feature. True to form, the filmmaker chooses to focus on the human side of this woolly boomer-rock mammoth: the prickly-sad family dynamics and coming-of-age of Bethel resident Elliot. Essentially this is the story of Woodstock organizer Elliot Tiber, whose 2007 memoir provides the basis for the film. Young Elliot (Demetri Martin) seems to be too busy caring for his elderly, cranky motel-keeping parents Sonia (Imelda Staunton) and Jake (Henry Goodman) and helming his hamlet's Chamber of Commerce to truly indulge in the countercultural explosion going on outside his bucolic borders. The cancellation of the Woodstock music festival in Middletown, N.Y., leads him to contact beatific promoter Michael Lang (Jonathan Groff) — he offers them the permit for his own humble local music gathering and helps secure a site: the dairy farm owned by Max Yasgur (Eugene Levy). Along the way, Elliot tunes in career-wise, turns on psychedelically, drops out of his parent's nest, and comes out sexually. Yet in spite of the expected excitement of putting on a show, kids, and compelling cameos by actors like Liev Schreiber and Paul Dano, almost everything about this film — which sidesteps the music to concentrate on one backstory — feels somewhat canned: from the button-eyed Martin's charming though ultimately limited performance to the curiously derivative styling of Groff's Lang as Treat Williams' free spirit in *Hair* (1979), bad hair, vested bare chest, and all. Guess you had to be there. (2:00) *California, Empire, Piedmont, Sundance Kabuki.* (Chun)

**The Time Traveler's Wife** (1:48) *1000 Van Ness, Presidio, Shattuck, Sundance Kabuki.*

**Up** (1:36) *SF Center.*

**World's Greatest Dad** Sometimes freaks emerge beyond explanation by nature or nurture. Such is unfortunately the case with nice-guy Seattle divorcee, high school English teacher, and frustrated author Lance Clayton (Robin Williams). His sole offspring, 15-year-old Kyle (Daryl Sabara), is any parent's worst nightmare: incredibly rude, crass, potty-mouthed, antisocial, and intellectually braindead. He's interested only in violent videogames, extreme porn, and wankin' his ween. When latter pursuits accidentally provoke a drastic shift in this miserable parent-child dynamic, Lance makes goodhearted but wrong-headed decisions that, well — suffice it to say *World's Greatest Dad* becomes a cunning satire of celebrity death cults, "inspirational" literature fads, and more. There are moments here that strain suspension of disbelief, particularly around the key turning point and close. But otherwise this sharp black comedy from writer-director Bobcat Goldthwait — yeah, that guy, get over it — is a conceptually outrageous yet surprisingly restrained zeitgeist skewering that gives Williams his best non-maniac showcase in years, or possibly ever. (1:39) *Albany, Bridge.* (Harvey) **SFBG**



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**Embarcadero Center Cinema** 1 Embarcadero Center, promenade level. 267-4893.

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**Marina Theatre** 2149 Chestnut. [www.Intsf.com/marina\\_theatre](http://www.Intsf.com/marina_theatre)

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Schedules are for Wed/2–Tues/8 except where noted. Director and year are given when available. Double and triple features are marked with a •. All times are p.m. unless otherwise specified.

**CAFÉ OF THE DEAD** 3208 Grand, Oakl; (510) 931-7945. Free. "Independent Filmmakers Screening Nite," Wed, 6:30.

**CASTRO** 429 Castro, SF; (415) 621-6120, www.castrotheatre.com. \$5-10. **Inglorious Basterds** (Tarantino, 2009), through Sept 10, call for times. "Midnites for Maniacs: Cocky White Guys Triple Feature:" •**Risky Business** (Brickman, 1983), Fri, 7:30; **Fast Times at Ridgemont High** (Heckerling, 1982), Fri, 9:30; and **The Last American Virgin** (Davidson, 1982), Fri, 11:30.

**CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER** 1118 Fourth St, San Rafael; (415) 454-1222, www.cafilm.org. \$6.50-10. **The Cove** (Monroe, 2009), call for dates and times. **In the Loop** (Iannucci, 2009), call for dates and times. **Pressure Cooker** (Grausman and Becker, 2008), call for dates and times. "The Films of My Life: Lars Ulrich:" **The Five Obstructions** (Leth and von Trier, 2003), Wed, 7. **The Baader Meinhof Complex** (Edel, 2008), Sept 4-10, call for times. **Still Walking** (Kore-eda, 2008), Sept 4-10, call for times.

**"FILM NIGHT IN THE PARK"** This week: Creek Park, 400 block of Sir Francis Drake, San Anselmo; (415) 453-4333, www.filmnight.org. \$3-6. "Bike movie night," film TBA, Fri, 8; **Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure** (Herek, 1989), Sat, 8; **Rear Window** (Hitchcock, 1954), Sun, 8.

**HUMANIST HALL** 390 27th St, Oakl; www.humanisthall.org. \$5. **Out of Balance: ExxonMobile's Impact on Climate Change** (2007), Wed, 7:30. **MECHANICS' INSTITUTE** 57 Post, SF; (415) 393-0100. \$10. "CinemaLit Film Series: The Luck of the Irish:" **My Left Foot** (Sheridan, 1989), Fri, 6:30.

**PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE** 2575 Bancroft, Berk; (510) 642-5249, www.bampfa.berkeley.edu. \$5.50-9.50. "Tea and Larceny: Classic British Crime Films:" **Obsession** (Dmytryk, 1949), Wed, 7; **Footsteps in the Fog** (Lubin, 1955), Thurs, 6:30; **I Met a Murderer** (Kellino, 1939), Thurs, 8:20; **It Always Rains on Sunday** (Hamer, 1947), Fri, 8:30 and Sat, 6:30; **Night and the City** (Dassin, 1950), Sat, 8:25; **Hell Drivers** (Endfield, 1957), Sun, 7. "A Theater Near You:" **Valentino: The Last Emperor** (Tymauer, 2008), Fri, 6:30. "Alternative Visions:" "Speechless: Recent Experimental Animation," Tues, 7:30.

**RED VIC** 1727 Haight, SF; (415) 668-3994. \$6-9. **Moon** (Jones, 2008), Wed, 2, 7:15, 9:25. **Drag Me to Hell** (Raimi, 2009), Thurs-Sat, 7:15, 9:25 (also Sat, 2, 4). **Up** (Docter, 2009), Sun-Tues, 7:15, 9:20 (also Sun, 2, 4:30).

**ROXIE** 3117 and 3125 16th St, SF; (415) 863-1087, www.roxie.com. \$5-10. "Women Make Movies:" **Mrs. Goundo's Daughter** (Attie and Goldwater, 2009), Wed, 7; **The Sari Soldiers** (Bridgham, 2008), Wed, 8:30; **Filming Desire** (Mandy, 2000), Thurs, 7; **"Black and White"** (MacDonald, 2006), Thurs, 7; **Who's Afraid of Kathy Acker?** (Caspar, 2008), Thurs, 8:30. **Bliss** (Oguz, 2007), Sept 4-10, 7, 9 (also Sat/5-Sun/6, 2:30, 4:45). **SFBG**

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**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321024-00 The following person is doing business as **O'NEILL ELECTRIC** 508 Bayswater Ave., Burlingame, CA. 94010. Eoin O'Neill, P.O. Box 117375, Burlingame, CA. 94011-7375. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date June 30, 2009. Signed Eoin O'Neill. This statement was filed by Lena Lee on July 6, 2009. **#35237. August 12, 19, 26 & September 2, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321642-00 The following person is doing business as **SAMASAMDI CONSULTING** 211 Clipper Street, San Francisco, CA. 94114. Krishanti Dharmaraj, 218 Juanita Avenue, Pacifica, CA 93044. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date July 30, 2009. Signed Krishanti Dharmaraj. This statement was filed by Maribel Jaldon on July 30, 2009. **#35236. August 12, 19, 26 & September 2, 2009**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321753-00 The following person is doing business as **FARMER AND FARMER LLC** 376 Hill Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Farmer and Farmer LLC, 376 Hill Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 11/05/2008. Signed Farmer and Farmer LLC. This statement was filed by Jeanette Yu on August 4, 2009. **#35250. September 2, 9, 16, 23, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321801-00 The following person is doing business as **GOLDEN GATE CARDIOLOGY** 2340 Clay Street, Suite 537, San Francisco, CA 94115-1932. James Mailhot, 60 Manzanita Court, Millbrae, CA 94030. Gary F. Milechman, 327 Deertail Lane, Mill Valley, CA. 94941. Fiona Dulbecco, 6 Throcmorfon Lane, Mill Valley, CA. 94941. Sung W. Choi, 2299 Sacramento Street, #3, San Francisco, CA. 94115. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 01-03-2000. Signed James Mailhot. This statement was filed by Jeanette Yu on August 6, 2009. **#35237. August 19, 26, September 2, & 9, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321895-00 The following person is doing business as **ABOUT-FACE**, 369 27th ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94131. ABOUT-FACE MEDIA LITERACY INC., CALIFORNIA 369 27th ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94131. This business is conducted by a CORPORATION. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date March 24, 2009. Signed Jennifer Berger. This statement was filed by Jeanette Yu on August 11, 2009. **August 26, September 2, 9 & 16, 2009** #35001

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321956-00 The following person is doing business as **CITY BUILDING SERVICES** Nery R. Figueroa 6518 3rd Street, San Francisco, CA 94124. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08-13-09. Signed Nery Figueroa. This statement was filed by Lena Lee on August 13, 2009. **#35237. August 19, 26, September 2, 9, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0321998-00 The following person is doing business as **FRESH LOCAL MUSIC** 245 Genebern Way, San Francisco, CA 94112. Karen B. Segal, 245 Genebern Way, San Francisco, CA 94112. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08/17/2009. Signed Karen B. Segal. This statement was filed by Mariedyne L. Argente on August 17, 2009. **#35245. August 26, September 2, 9, & 16, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322012-00 The following person is doing business as **PINEDA PAZ MOVING** 109 Del Monte Ave., South San Francisco, CA. 94080. Dany Omar Paz, 3730 Madera Way, San Bruno, CA 94066. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08/17/2009. Signed Dany Omar Paz. This statement was filed by Maribel Jaldon on August 17, 2009. **#35243. August 26, September 2, 9, & 16, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322032-00 The following person is doing business as **MINT**, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. Mike Nasra, 800 Hacunda Way, Millbrae, CA 94030. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08/18/09. Signed Mike Nasra. This statement was filed by Jennifer Wong on August 18, 2009. **#35241. August 26, September 2, 9, & 16, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322099-00 The following person is doing business as **VIN AMBASADOR** 257 States Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Classic Wine Tours, Inc. CA , 257 States Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08-27-09. Signed Andres Martell. This statement was filed by Mariedyne L. Argente on August 20, 2009 **#35247. September 2, 9, 16, 23, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322131-00 The following person is doing business as **HOUSE OF COMMONS** 4107 California Street, #3, San Francisco, CA 94118. Joseph Ison, 4107 California Street #3, San Francisco, CA 94118. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08/24/2009. Signed Joseph Ison. This statement was filed by Mariedyne L. Argente on August 24, 2009. **#35244. August 26, September 2, 9, & 16, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322141-00 The following person is doing business as **JUSTICE GRACE VINEYARDS** 441 A 14th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Justice Grace Revival, LLC, 441 A 14th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 03-17-2005. Signed Eric Cohen. This statement was filed by Mariedyne L. Argente on August 24, 2009. **#35249. September 2,9,16,23**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322155-00 The following person is doing business as **SAN FRANCISCO FORENSIC INSTITUTE, CHRIS A. FLINTON, 4817 CALDERWOOD COURT, OAKLAND, CA 94605** 870 MARKET STREET, SUITE 1107, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102. This business is conducted by AN INDIVIDUAL. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 10/01/2008. Signed CHARLES A. FLINTON. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Jeanette Yu on August 24, 2009. **Publication dates: September 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2009. L#35002.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322192-00 The following person is doing business as **MAID PRO** 1550 Bryant Street, Suite 154, San Francisco, CA 94103. AGE ENTERPRISES INC. CA. 1550 Bryant Street, Suite 154, San Francisco, CA 94103. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 04-01-2009. Signed Alton Wong. This statement was filed by Maribel Jaldon on August 26, 2009 **#35248. September 2, 9, 16, 23, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322223-00 The following person is doing business as **SYMPHONIC FINISHING** 335 Hearst Ave. San Francisco, CA 94112. Andres Marquez, 335 Hearst Ave. San Francisco, CA 94112. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08-27-09. Signed Andres Marquez. This statement was filed by Lena Lee on August 27, 2009. **#35246. September 2, 9, 16, 23, 2009.**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT** FILE NO. A-0322232-00 The following person is doing business as **ART DEBUTANT** 83 McAllister Street, Apt. 108. San Francisco, CA 94102. Natalia M. Rivera, 83 McAllister Street, Apt. 108. San Francisco, CA 94102. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 08-26/2009. Signed Natalia Rivera. This statement was filed by Magdalena Zevallos on August 27, 2009. **#35251. September 2, 9, 16, & 23, 2009.**

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE.** Date of Filing Application: August 12, 2009. To Whom It May Concern: The name of the applicant is: **Wu Zhi Quan**. The applicant listed above is applying to The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 2346 Lombard Street, San Francisco, CA 94123-2602. Type of License Applied for: **41- ON-SALE BEER AND WINE - EATING PLACE**. Publication date: August 26, September 2, 9, & 16, 2009. L#35238.



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# Ooh, hard

By Andrea Nemerson  
andrea@mail.altsexcolumn.com

*Andrea is on vacation.  
This column originally ran  
5/21/08.*

## Dear Andrea:

I'm confused. Are there any guys out there who aren't at the extremes as far as sex goes? My ex-boyfriend was completely obsessed. He was so obsessed with sex, everything was sexual. If I said it was raining out. He'd say "ooh sounds ... wet." If I said something was hard (difficult) he'd say "ooh, hard!" It was like that with everything! He was not some 20-year-old kid, either. He was 48! Then I fell in love with his polar opposite. We've been together a couple years and our sex life has gone downhill rapidly, from two or three times a week to maybe once every three months. I really love this guy and I want to marry him. I just need to figure out how to find a happy medium.

*Love,  
Opposite Day*

## Dear Day:

The first guy sounds unbearable. I'm surprised you stuck it out with him as long (oooooh, *long*) as you did. It must have been hard to ... I mean you had to have been open to ... I mean on top of — oh, never mind. It must have been like living with Michael Scott with a few drinks in him: "That's what *she* said!" Awful. You have my sympathy.

The new guy is a harder nut (oh, shut up) to crack. I don't think it's abnormal to experience a drop-off after a few years, particularly, but four times a year is pretty slim pickings. As a mere stripling of 31, I would be very cautious, in your place, about signing any long-term contracts under those conditions. At the very least you

ought to know what's going on with him (and with your relationship) before you agree to marry someone who frankly isn't going to satisfy you. It would be a different story if you were saying "We only do it every three months and we're both happy with that." Then I'd dance at your wedding. The way you're talking about it, though, I'd feel more like I was dancing on your marriage's grave.

You'll have to have one of those sit-downs nobody wants but nearly everybody needs.

You're going to have to have one of those sit-downs that nobody wants but nearly everybody needs at some point. This is no time to ask him what's wrong with him or to suggest that maybe he's just not man enough for you, not if you actually like him, anyway. It is time to find out what's going on with him all those times you initiate and you "get nowhere." Is it possible he's missing your cues? Is there a better time or a better approach? A different act? If the answer is no, no, no, and no, and this is just who he is — a guy who's interested in sex four times a year and anything extra just seems unnecessary or unappealing — then you're going to have to figure out if there's some way you can get your itches scratched. You're going to have to find out, is all. I don't care if it's hard. And that's not what she said, or so I hear.

*Love,  
Andrea*

See Andrea's other column at [carnalnation.com](http://carnalnation.com).

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